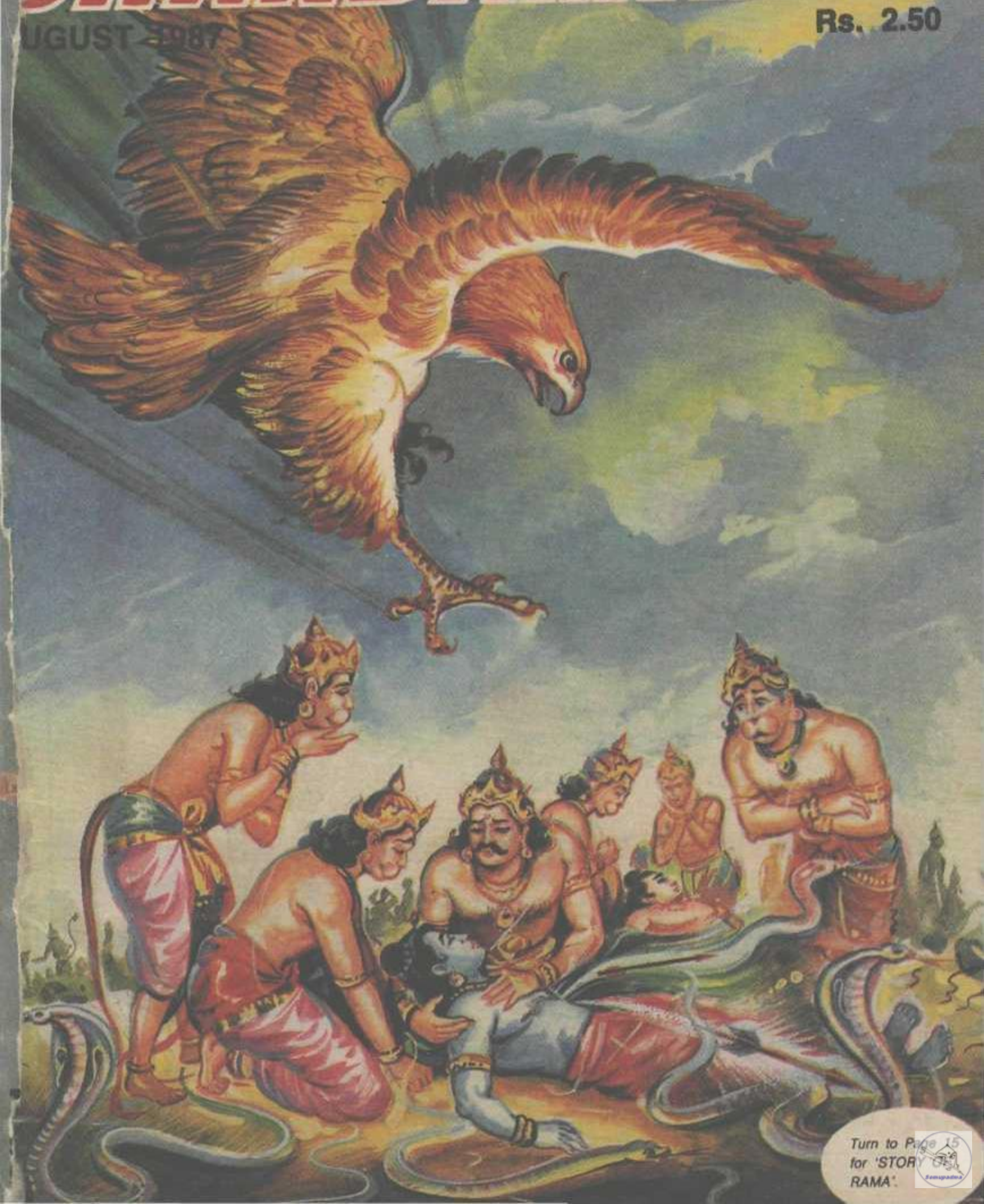


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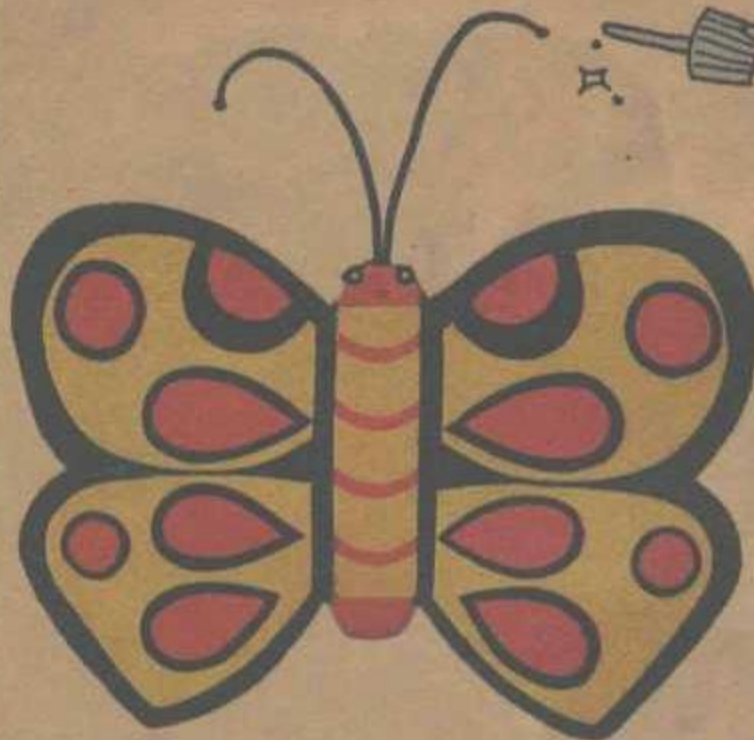


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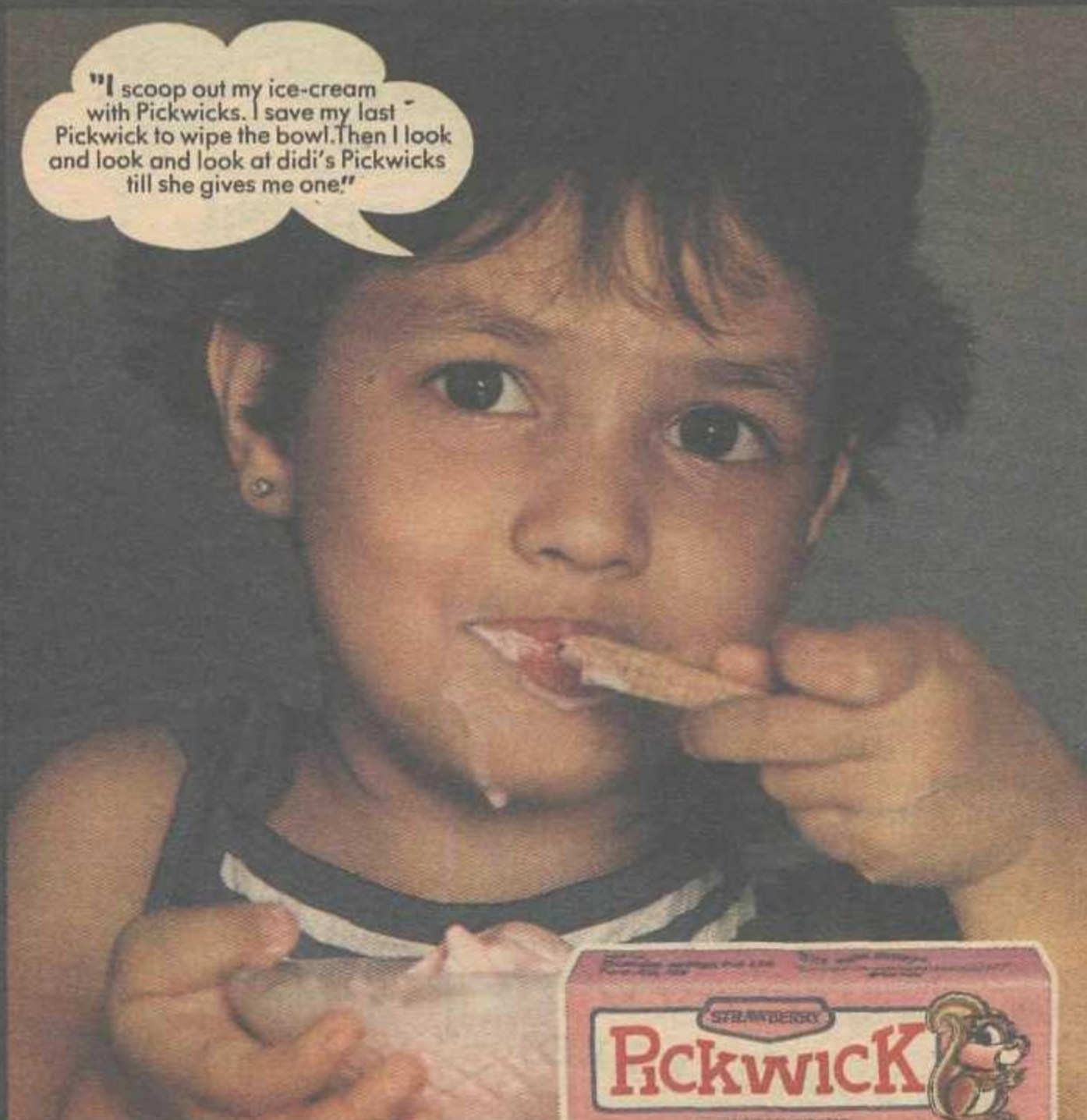
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IN THIS ISSUE**Mythology:**

The Battle Begins—
In Story of Rama ... Page 15

Stories:

Judgement in Hurry ... Page 13
The Prophet of Doom ... Page 21
A Bet with the King ... Page 26
The Miracles ... Page 29
The Forgotten Man ... Page 36
The Innocent ... Page 46

The Mysterious Hermit ... Page 39
A Strange Property ... Page 48
A Matter of Need ... Page 55
Gold in Water ... Page 56

Picture Stories:

Ajanta and Ellora ... Page 51
Laughs from Many Lands ... Page 20

Features:

World of Nature ... Page 34
World of Sports ... Page 35
Jada Bharata ... Page 59

AND News Flash, Did You Know, Let Us Know and More!

NEXT ISSUE

DOOM OVER THE CITADEL : The eventful war between the lusty demons and the courageous army of Rama approaches its end.

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Vol. 18 SEPTEMBER 1987 No. 3

features, in *Toward Better English* and *Let Us Know*.

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*Sampadi yasya na harṣo vipadi viṣādo raṇe ca dhīratvam
Tam bhuvanatrayatilakam janayati janani sutam viralam*

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A TIME TO REMEMBER

August is the time for us to remember the great expectations with which the people of the previous generations, from the time of the Sepoy Mutiny to that of the Quit India Movement, fought for India's freedom. Those who laid down their lives in the cause of freedom were sure that we will make the right use of the costly freedom they were trying to win for us.

It is never too late. India has everything to make us happy and forward-looking. All that is necessary for us is to be truthful, honest in our deeds and respectful to one another. Everything will change—change for the better and the brighter. There cannot be any greater sense of satisfaction for us than in being true to ourselves.

Thoughts to be Treasured

The fire of independence is burning just as bright in my breast as in the most fiery breast in this country, but ways and methods differ.

—Mahatma Gandhi

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CITY IN THE SEA

Shortage of land space is not going to cramp the Japanese style of functioning. Japan proposed to build a whole new city in the sea, 150 km from Tokyo.

The giant city, measuring 5 km on a side, will rest on hundreds of cylindrical legs arranged at 50-metre intervals.

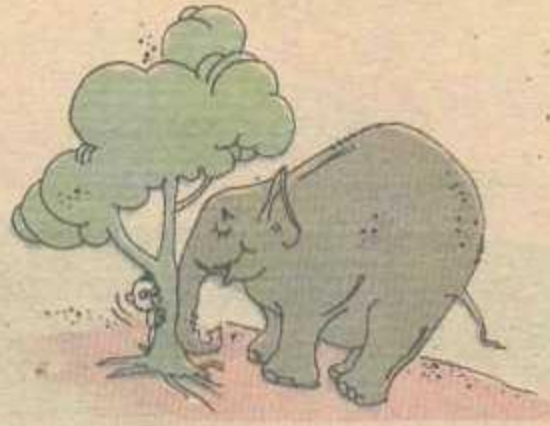
It is estimated that the ocean city would consume 100 million tons of steel and cost about \$ 200,000 million.

TALLEST ELEPHANT

The Suklaphanta Wildlife Reserve in Nepal is home to an 11-foot-five-inch tall elephant.

The Asiatic elephant is 45 years old. The average height of an elephant ranges from nine to 10 feet. Thus this one is the tallest in the world.

The wildlife reserve, situated along the Nepal-India border, boasts some 3,000 antelopes, some of which are the biggest in Asia. These antelopes have six branches in each of their horns.



LENIN'S WATCH

A silver pocket watch worn by Lenin until 1918 was auctioned in Munich for \$ 103,000.

The Russian revolutionary had given it as a present in October 1918 to the German politician Kari Liebknecht, a member of Parliament who was murdered in 1919. The watch had belonged to the Russian Czars before the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.

YOGIC CURE

The Indian and Soviet scientists plan to study jointly the use of the yoga system as a preventive measure as well as for treatment in cardiology.


A Moscow Institute will conduct a three-year research programme in collaboration with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi.





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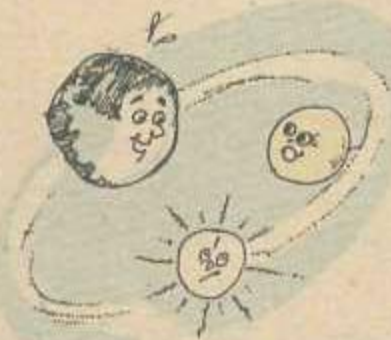


DID YOU KNOW?



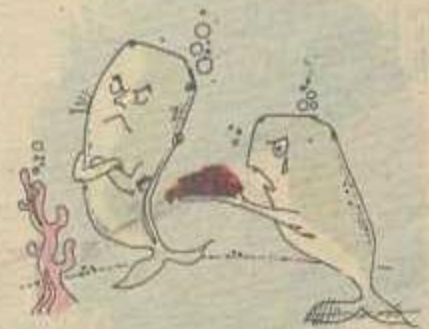
The setting sun is more red than the rising sun because the air has more dust by the day's end.

The first metal to be used by man was tin.



Venus, the Earth's closest neighbour, is 25 million miles away.

The blue whale can go without food for six months. The nutrition stored in its bladder sustains it during such periods.



The famous Helen Keller, though blind, has developed such a sense of smell that she could identify her friends by their personal odours.

Planet Jupiter is large enough to contain all the other planets in the solar system.





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JUDGEMENT IN HURRY

A famous philosopher was leading his disciples through a forest. At one place they saw that a number of trees had been felled, but a solitary tree had been left amidst the felled trees.

"Why have you spared this tree?" the philosopher asked the woodcutter.

"This is a useless tree," replied he.

The philosopher looked at his disciples. "Do you mark the irony of life? One who is useless lives longer," he observed.

The disciples nodded in appreciation of their master's wisdom.

But the woodcutter laughed. The philosopher thought that his laughter ridiculed him. He was a bit surprised.

It was a hot noon. The woodcutter offered them rest and food in his hut. They accepted the offer gratefully. As they took rest, the woodcutter asked his son to kill one of their geese for sake of the guests.

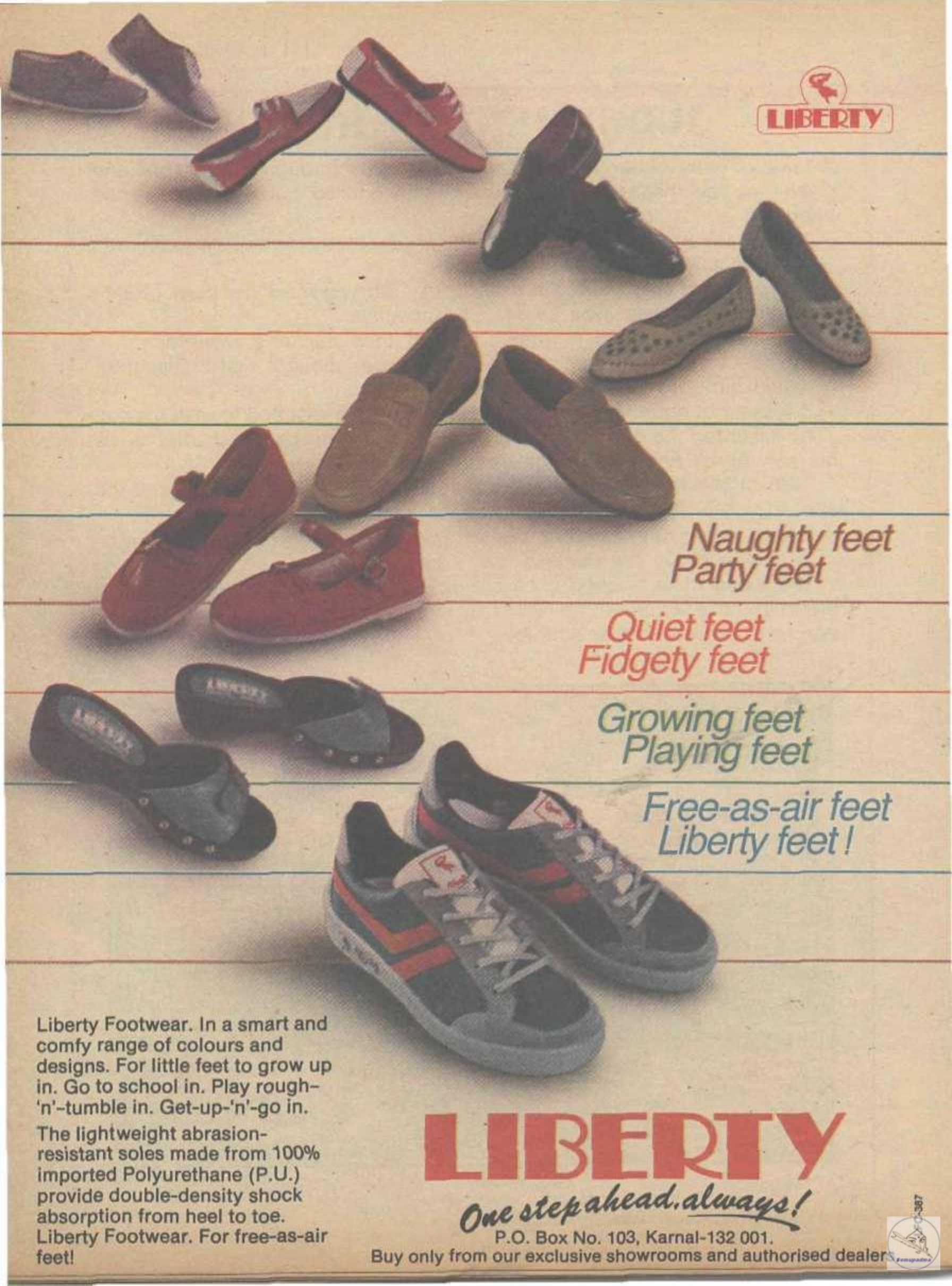
"Which one to kill? The one laying eggs or the useless one?" asked the son.

"What does your common sense say?" asked the father.

"We should kill the useless one," said the son.

The woodcutter laughed once again. The philosopher, in silence, understood that the statement he had made in a hurry might have sounded great, but facts were not that simple!





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STORY OF

RAMA



—By Manoj Das

(As Rama's army camped in front of Ravana's fort, the demon-king tried to assess his enemy's strength. When told by his ministers that there was still time for him to avoid a war, he grew furious and drove them away from his presence.)

THE BATTLE BEGINS

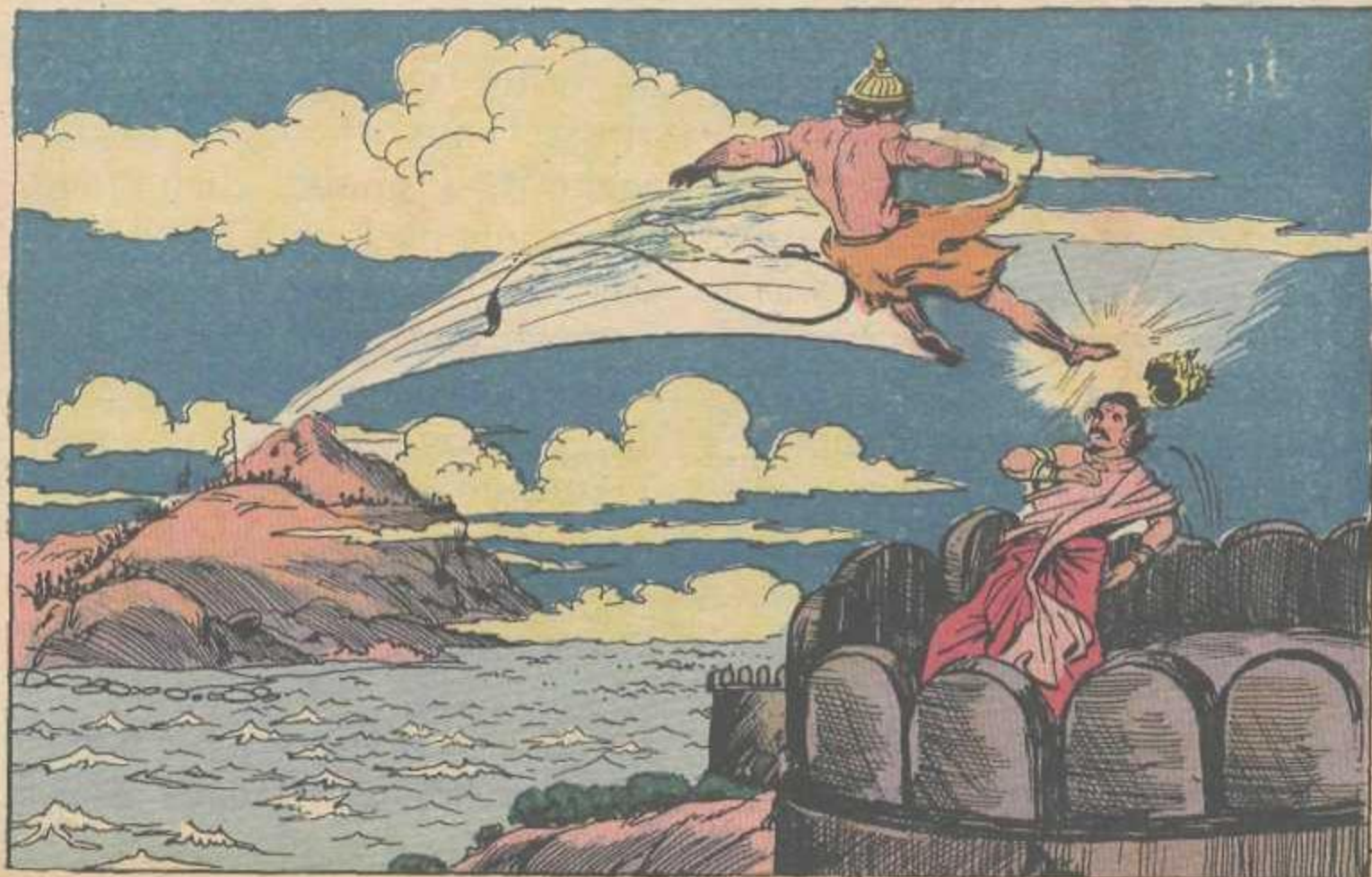
Ravana's pride, however, got a rude jolt in the morning.

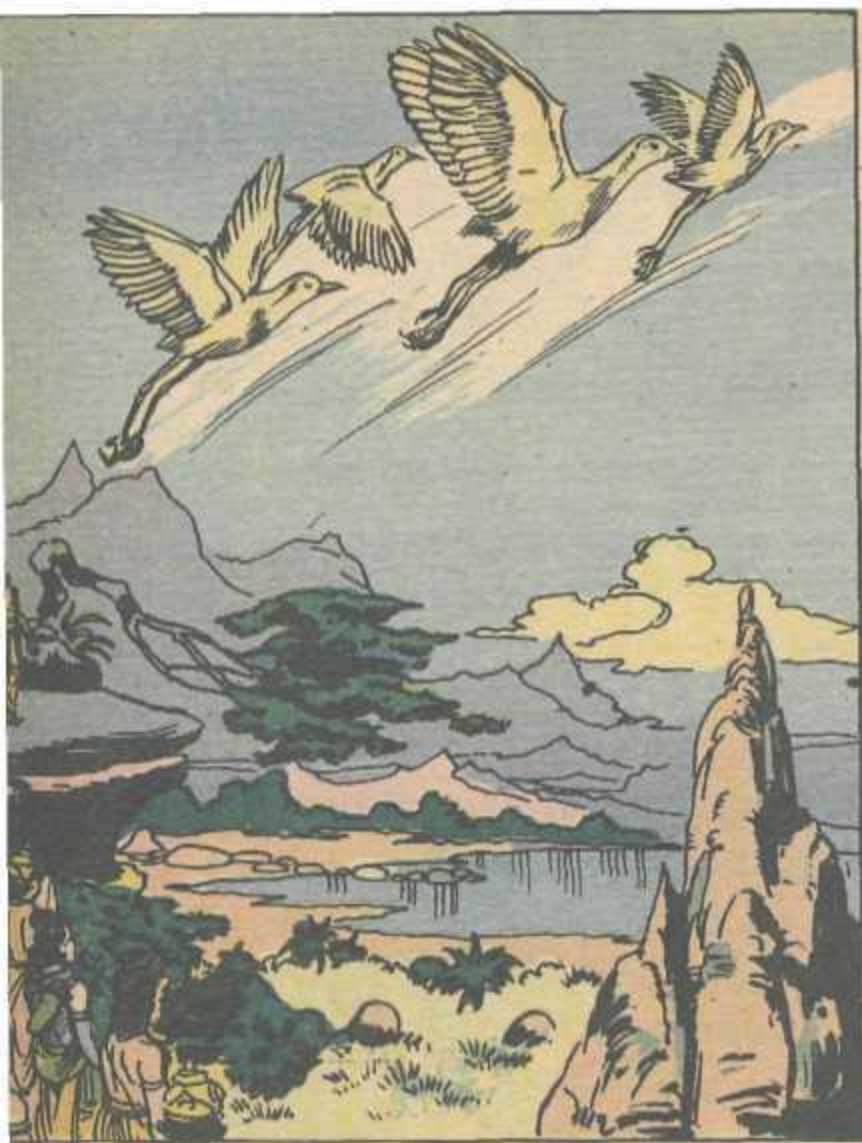
It happened like this: Rama and the Vanara King Sugriva had climbed a mountain, to make a general survey of Ravana's citadel. They could see Ravana seated in a room at the summit of his palace. Perhaps he too was trying to have a

bird's-eye view of Rama's camp.

Sugriva did something most unexpected. Without saying a word to Rama, he took a leap and descended right in front of the demon-king. Before the latter had understood what was happening, Sugriva toppled his crown.

Ravana, bewildered for a mo-





ment, soon recovered his wits and warded off the next blow from Sugriva. Both were then locked in wrestling, none gaining an upperhand over the other.

Then Ravana began applying his power of wizardry. Sugriva knew that the demon-king was a great expert in that art. Instantly he turned and, in another leap, was back with Rama.

"Sugriva, you should not have acted on impulse. Don't you understand what a great setback our mission would have got had you got captured or killed?" said Rama, mildly taking his enthusiastic ally to task.

"I just could not contain my anger at the villain's sight. Secondly, I wanted to give him a jolt," said Sugriva. "The fellow takes his power and position too much for granted. He needed to be shaken!" he added.

Meanwhile Vibhishana had despatched his four demon-lieutenants who were as much adept in wizardry as the best among the demons of Lanka, to find out how well Ravana was getting ready to defend his fort. They took the form of birds and flew from bastion to bastion and tower to tower of Ravana's castle. Those super-wizards like Ravana and his crafty son Indrajit who could have recognised them were too busy to pay attention to all and sundry birds. Thus the four secret agents had smooth flights and they came back with much vital information. They told Rama, Sugriva and Vibhishana who were the different demon generals guarding the different gates. This helped Rama to decide who among his lieutenants should lead the assaults against the defenders so that there will be matching trial of strength.

But the compassionate Rama decided to give Ravana a last

chance to see reason and surrender Sita to him. At his order the Vanara-Prince Angada flew into Ravana's presence and in a voice that was at once firm and gentle, asked him to act in accordance with Rama's offer.

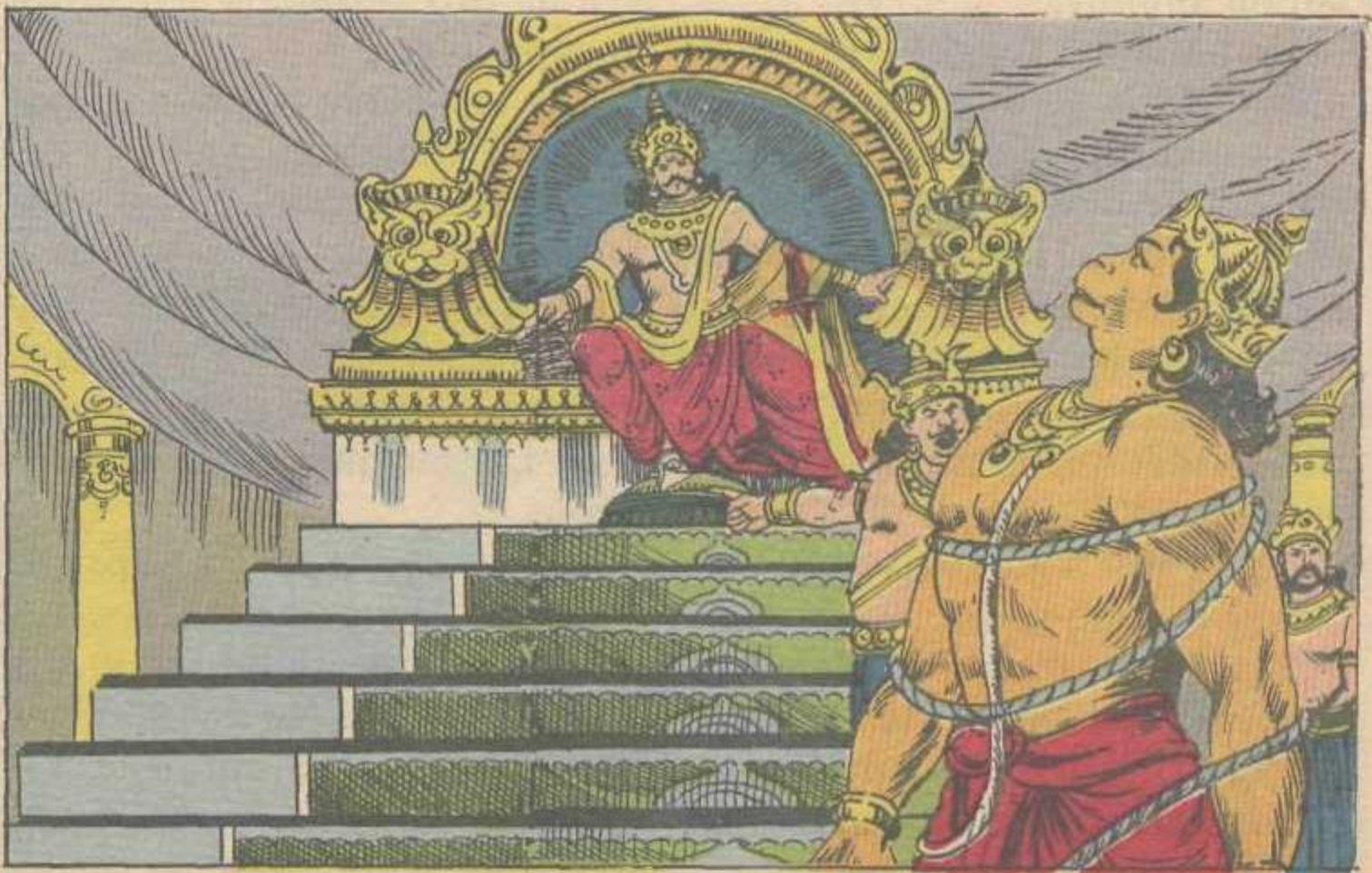
"Take hold of this audacious chap and put him to death!" was Ravana's reaction to the emissary. Immediately four demons took hold of the brave messenger. Angada did not seem to take note of them.

"You unlucky demon-king, then get ready to try your strength with Rama. You can only blame yourself for the terrible doom that awaits you!"

Angada hurled his warning contemptuously at Ravana and himself shot up into the sky. Those demons aggressively clinging to him fell down like cockroaches. Angada, before disappearing, planted a kick on the pinnacle of Ravana's court-building and smashed it.

Ravana ground his teeth in anger and despair.

Now that Ravana had spurned the offer of peace for the last time, there was no need to wait. Rama gave the signal to his army to begin the attack. The very next moment the Vanaras rushed towards the gateways of Ravana's fort making





deafening noise. The battle broke out and was in full swing within minutes.

Rama alone fought with four of the generals of Ravana. The Vanara-Prince Angada challenged the demon-Prince Indrajit to a fight. Hanuman tried to tackle Jamvumali and Lakshmana fought against Virupaksha.

Angada's fearful mace soon demolished the flag-staff as well as the wheels of Indrajit's chariot. This was a great insult to the proud demon-prince who realised that he was no match for the Vanara-Prince. He decided to play tricks on his adversary. He became invisible applying

his wizardry on himself. It was then very easy for him to attack Rama and Lakshmana who could not see him and that is why neither could defend themselves against him nor could attack him.

And Indrajit was anxious to claim victory for himself at the earliest. He applied one of the most formidable magic weapons he commanded—the *Naga-pasha*—discharging poisonous serpents looking like ordinary arrows. In their multitudes these pliable arrows got fastened round the persons of Rama and Lakshmana and bled them with their stings.

The two brothers fell down unconscious.

The invisible demon-prince laughed alone like a dozen demons, like the roar of a volcano. Surprised, his soldiers grew attentive to the situation. They rent the sky with their jubilant hurrahs when they saw Rama and Lakshmana lying unconscious.

Still more surprised were the Vanaras. Were their heroes to last for so brief a period in the battlefield? Is it for this end that they bridged the gulf and arrived on this alien soil?

"Father! Rama is no more! I have finished him on your behalf. Relax!" announced Indra-jit inside his father's castle, laughing all the while.

"I'm proud of you, my son!" said Ravana, embracing the young warrior.

In the battlefield, however, the situation was taking a different turn. Through the clouds appeared a strange bird-like being. His godly grace and radiance which grew more and more prominent as he came nearer, made all spellbound.

And something wonderful happened as this grand bird-like being descended. The arrows

sticking to and entangling the limbs of Rama and Lakshmana changed into serpents which they really were. And the serpents were in a great hurry to disperse! By the time the great being settled down beside Rama and Lakshmana, folding his golden wings, not even one of those serpents were in sight.

Soon, under the loving gaze of the being and the hopeful eyes of the friends, Rama and Lakshmana sat up and asked the stranger, "Who are you—O kind friend, giver of our lives?"

"I'm Garuda," sweetly said the stranger.

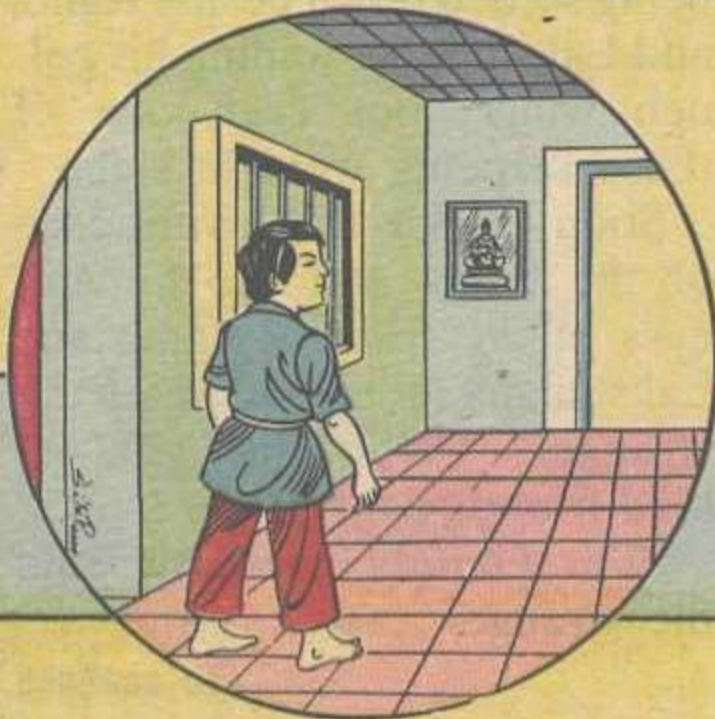
—To continue



The bandit who was training his son in his profession, told him, "Apply common sense. If you cannot find cash or gold, pick up the whole bag. If you cannot find the bag, pick up the whole chest..."



On his maiden adventure, the young bandit entered a house, but found nothing. But he was not to return empty-handed.



In the morning he was caught while trying to push the house. Nobody understood what he was doing. He was given a thrashing and released.



Back home, he reported to his father, "When I did not find even a chest, I applied my common sense and was trying to pick up the house!"



THE PROPHET OF DOOM

“A great astrologer is camping on the river-bank, O Queen!” a maid reported to the Queen of Vijaynagar. “His name is Bhairav Bhatta. All his predictions have come true.”

“Indeed, I have heard of the man. How much I wish that I could persuade the king to invite him to our court,” the queen said thoughtfully.

“O Queen, why don’t you sound the King about him?” suggested the maid.

“I shall do so,” said the queen.

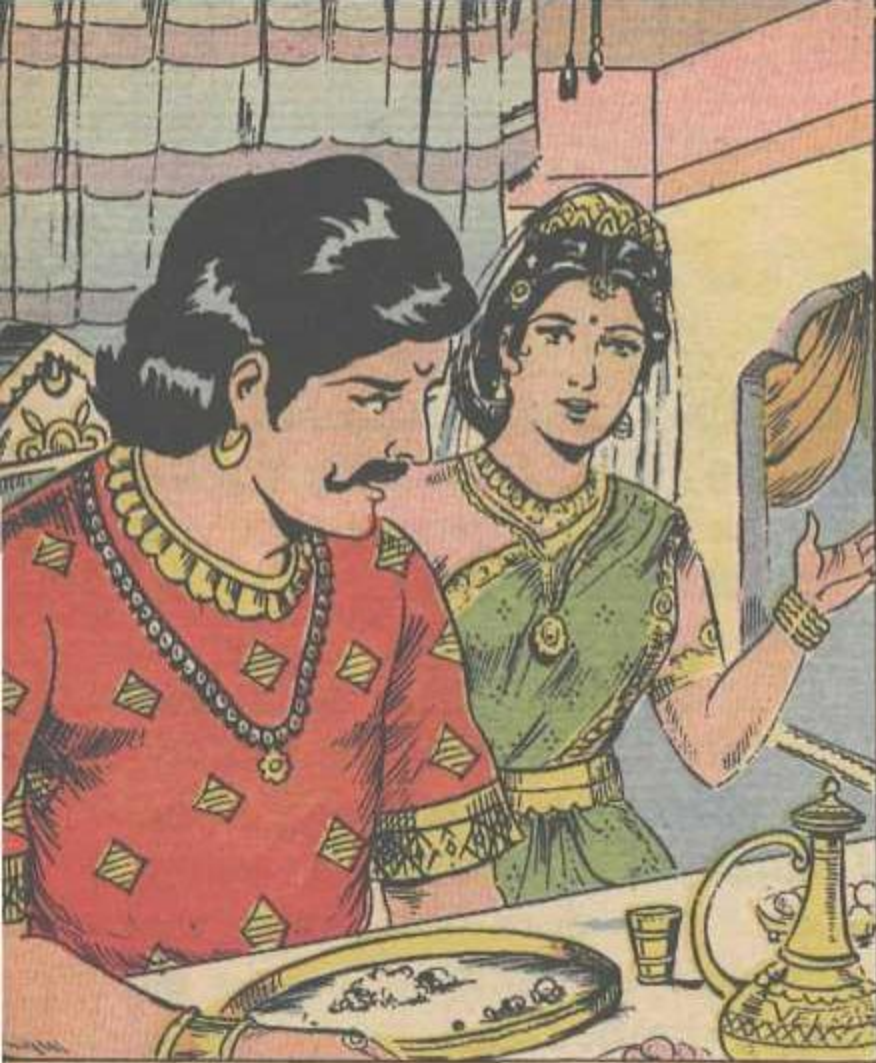
When the king sat for dinner, the queen took the fan from the

maid standing behind him and began fanning the king herself and asked, “Is it true that you are planning a military expedition against Bijapur?”

“It is true. Unless we defeat Bijapur once for all, we will not be able to live in peace. The Sultan of Bijapur is a vexing pest. He does not have the courage to confront me in an open battle. But he is never tired in his efforts to grab a village here today and a village there tomorrow along the frontier,” said the king.

“When do you propose to march on Bijapur?” asked the





queen.

"We have not yet decided on the date. But the time is propitious now. We can march any day," said the king.

"My lord, should you not consult a gifted astrologer in deciding the date of your expedition? There is one..."

"Are you speaking of Bhairav Bhatta?" asked the king before the queen had put forward the astrologer's name.

"Yes, my Lord. You have heard of him already!"

"Yes. He prophesied that the village Padmaranya may go up in smoke in a fortnight. The villagers did not pay any heed to his warning. Last Monday night

a fire devastated the village. No doubt, Bhatta is a gifted astrologer. I'm told that he was the best of astrologers in Varanasi," said the king.

The queen's face brightened up. "Then, my lord, wouldn't it be wise on your part to consult him?"

The king thought for a moment and then said, "I think you are right. We should seek his advice on our expedition."

The king's emissary met the astrologer the very next day and requested him to pay a visit to the king's court. The astrologer looked very grave and asked, "Why does the king want me?" Then he sat for a minute with his eyes closed. He was all smiles when he opened his eyes. "I know why he wants me. It is to find out which day should be propitious for him to lead an expedition against a certain kingdom. Well, I know which kingdom he has in mind. But I should not speak out publicly. Very well. I will oblige the king. I shall visit his court on the fourth day from today," said Bhairav Bhatta. Then he whispered in the emissary's ear, "Ask the king to keep your general's horoscope ready for

me to see."

The emissary returned to the king and told him that Bhairav Bhatta was not only an astrologer, but also a yogi! He could tell why the king wanted to see him!

The king was much impressed. He secured his general's horoscope. The general was in the frontier.

Bhairav Bhatta reached the court on the appointed day. The king received him with fanfare and said, "O learned scholar, you already know why I was so eager to consult you. Now, tell me, which day should be propitious for me to set out on the proposed expedition."

The astrologer examined the general's horoscope and then the king's horoscope. All the ministers and the prominent courtiers were gazing on him intently.

Bhatta's face grew more and more grave. He looked at the king and said, "My lord, you must not cross the river Tungabhadra during the coming five years. If you do, misfortune will strike you!"

The astrologer's words dampened the spirit of all. It was the king who was to lead the army,



along with his general. How can the soldiers fight enthusiastically without the king's leadership?

Bhatta was engrossed in examining the general's horoscope. He looked even more grave. "My lord, when did you last hear from the general? Is he safe? I'm afraid, there has been an attempt on his life. I wish he has escaped it!" observed Bhatta to everybody's surprise and fear. Within an hour news reached that the general had been assassinated at night!

The event caused great frustration in the court. The news of the general's death and the astrologer's uncanny power of prediction spread at the speed



of whirlwind. The soldiers felt awfully depressed.

But the name of Bhairav Bhatta was on everybody's lips. What a great astrologer!

Bhairav Bhatta lived in the palace, like a king himself!

The king had a wise old minister who had retired from service. At night the old man met the king. "My lord, I wish to give a public reception to Bhairav Bhatta tomorrow."

"Do as you please," said the king who was feeling very disheartened, though his respect for the astrologer had greatly increased.

The former minister, despite his old age, was found to be very

active in organising the public meeting, in Bhatta's honour. He asked the courtiers and officers to see that the whole army is present at the meeting, along with the nobility.

The astrologer was led to the dais as musicians played their instruments softly. The old minister garlanded him and gave a speech in his praise. Then he asked the astrologer, "Sir, will you kindly tell us how long will you live?"

The highly flattered and proud Bhatta said, "Well, I shall live till I'm ninety. Now I am only fortyfive!"

"Friends, you have heard the famous astrologer's prophecy about his own death.

I'm sure, he can never die before he is ninety. Am I correct?"

The old Minister put the question to the astrologer.

"You are correct!" answered Bhatta, smiling.

"Friends! Let us see how correct the astrologer is!" said the old minister at the top of his voice. He sounded ominous and he suddenly looked very grave. Something most unexpected happened the very next moment. The old minister's servant

who stood behind the astrologer drew his sword and beheaded Bhatta.

All, including the king were stunned. But the old minister was in his elements. He gave a pull to the bushy hair of Bhatta's head. The wig came out. The beard too came out.

"My lord and friends!" said the old minister. The other day I was returning from my pilgrimage when I saw this man in his camp. I had a suspicion that he was a minister of Bijapur. Through my trusted friends I began an investigation. I was convinced that he had been sent here to foil our plans. At first he predicted of a fire in Padmaranya and his own people set fire to the village. They did several similar things. They carried out their plot very well. They decided when to assassinate our

general so that this wretched fellow can announce of the general's death in the court! As his so called prophecy was found to be true, our king and our entire army were disheartened. I knew that the only way to restore the army's confidence will be to prove the man wrong before the soldiers. I have done that. If I have done wrong, I am prepared to be punished."

The king embraced his former minister. The soldiers were all agog with excitement. Investigation proved that some of the people who inspired the king and the queen to invite the astrologer had been bribed to do so.

The king had no hesitation in crossing the river Tungabhadra. He led his army against Bijapur and defeated the Sultan.





A BET WITH THE KING

Gopal was not only a jester, but also a trusted adviser to King Ashok Gupta of Ratnapur.

The king was a lover of talent and patronised several gifted poets and scholars. Gopal was one of his favourites. Gopal's wit and jest kept the atmosphere of the court jovial.

Because Gopal was talented, that did not mean that his wife's younger brother, Suresh, will be talented!

But that is what Suresh seemed to claim! It was quite an embarrassing situation for Gopal. Well, it happened like this: Suresh served as a teacher in a school in the neighbouring kingdom. He visited Ratnapur when his father took seriously ill. Soon the old man died. After the funeral rites were over,

Gopal's wife told Suresh, "Suresh, it is high time you come back to Ratnapur!"

"Sister, I'd love to come back, but on condition that my brother-in-law helps me to get a job in the king's court," replied Suresh.

Gopal was in a fix. He had never been in the habit of recommending people for jobs to the king. How can he do so in the case of his brother-in-law.

As he hemmed and hawed, Suresh laughed and said, "Dear brother, I don't ask you to say even a single word in my favour to the king. All I wish you to do is to present me to the king at a specific time. Only if I can achieve what I propose to achieve, you must speak a kind word or two about me to the king."

And Suresh confided to Gopal what he proposed to achieve on his meeting with the king.

"Impossible! You cannot achieve such a feat. Either you are crazy or you are going to practise a bit of leg-pulling on me," said Gopal.

But Suresh was serious. He swore that he did not mean to embarrass Gopal before the king.

As desired by Suresh, Gopal presented him to the king when the king relaxed on his balcony in the afternoon. It was time for the king to drink a glass of spiced milk. A personal servant

brought the milk to the king.

Just as the king would begin sipping it, Suresh observed, "I hope, the king does not drink through his mouth!"

The king stopped. "What do you mean? Is it possible to drink milk or anything else any other way?" he asked.

"Of course, Your Majesty, one can drink through one's ears or nose or eyes! Through eyes it tastes best!" said Suresh with confidence.

"Is that so? Can you drink it like that?" demanded the king.

"I can try. What will the king give me if I succeed?" asked



Suresh.

"A thousand gold coins. What will you give if you fail?" demanded the king.

"Your Majesty, a poor teacher that I am, how can I part with more than one coin? In fact, that is all I have with me," said Suresh.

The king laughed and said, "What a bet! It is all right. Now let me see you drink the milk in your special way." The king handed over the glass to Suresh.

Suresh accepted the glass with a show of great humility, touched it to his forehead and then drank it in the usual way!

"My Lord, I failed to establish my claim. I accept defeat. I surrender the coin!" said Suresh and he placed the coin before

the king.

The king laughed.

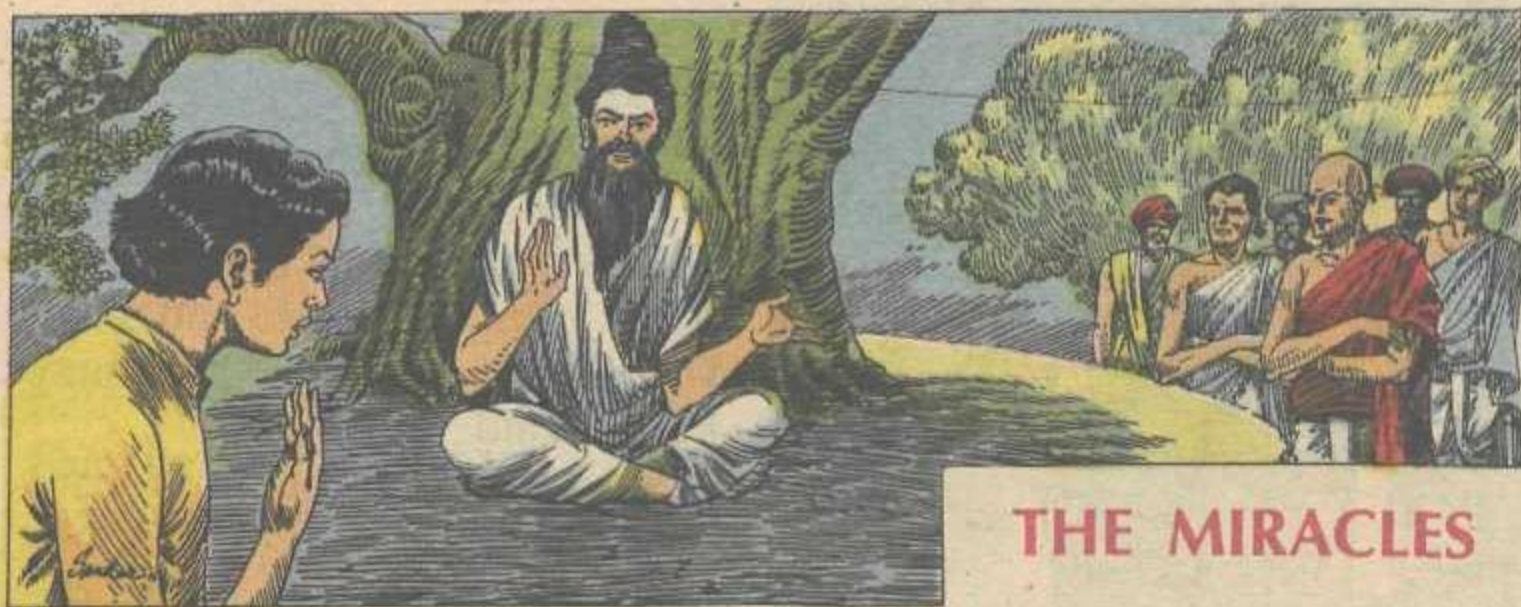
"My Lord, I'm in a strange situation," said Gopal the jester.

"What is that?"

"My Lord, this chap claimed that he can make you hand over your drink to him for consideration of a rupee. I promised to recommend him to you for a job if he succeeded in doing this. I was sure that he will fail in such a fantastic feat. But, My Lord, he achieved it with ease!" said the jester who was really surprised.

The king laughed. "He is your worthy brother-in-law. You are obliged to seek a job for him, is that so? All right. Let him become the chief receptionist of the court," said the king.





THE MIRACLES

Dharamchand was a money-lender. He was famous for his wealth and cleverness in his home area.

But is "famous" the right adjective for him? We wonder. "Notorious" would suit him much better. Indeed, people hated him and feared him for his merciless dealing with his debtors. If one failed to pay Dharamchand his due along with the last pie of the interest demanded by him according to the contract, one's fate was sealed. Dharamchand would take over his house and lands and reduce him to a beggar. Be his debtor a helpless widow or a sick old man, none was shown any consideration.

Dharamchand's only child, Surajkumar, had started learning the art of the business from his father. The young man was

quite intelligent and he was catching up rather well. Father and the son had every reason to be happy when the father suddenly took ill. The local physicians treated him promptly, but his condition deteriorated.

"I must carry you to the town. There are great physicians there to treat you," said Suraj.

"Oh no. That will be very expensive," observed Dharamchand, dismissing his son's proposal.

And by the time Suraj decided to take him to the town in spite of his unwillingness, he was no longer in a condition to move!

Suraj was very upset. He had not yet learnt all the rules and tricks of the trade. What will happen if his father dies?

He saw a ray of hope in Sadhu Gajendra Baba who camped



near his village on his way to a pilgrim centre. The Sadhu was highly respected by the people. His advice solved many problems of the villagers.

Suraj met him and apprised him of his father's condition. The Sadhu kept quiet for some time and then said softly, "Young man, your father carries on him curses of so many harassed people. He cannot escape suffering. However, take him to Varanasi; let him have a dip in the Ganga and offer Puja to Lord Viswanath. He may be cured."

"But my father is in no condition to go on a journey," said

Suraj humbly.

"In that case you proceed to Varanasi and perform the rituals piously. Fetch a potful of water from the Ganga and make your father drink it. That may help," said the sage.

Suraj left his father in the care of a relative and went to Varanasi. He did as advised by the sage and began his return journey faithfully carrying a potful of water from the sacred river.

Roads were safe in those days. Suraj made a short cut through a forest. As he walked alone, he heard someone's footsteps behind him. He looked back. What he saw gave him the creeps. A vampire followed him.

"Young man, can I be of any help to you?" asked the vampire.

Though terrified, Suraj pretended to be bold. "I'm carrying the sacred Ganga water and going home. How do I care for a vampire?" he said.

"Young man, won't you give me a little Ganga water? For long have I lived this cursed life of a vampire. Nowadays I yearn to do some good to passers-by so that I can earn their goodwill. If I drink a sip of Ganga water, I

shall be free from the burden of my sin!" said the vampire in a very humble tone.

"Begone! Is it to give you a share of this water that I went all the way to Varanasi, took bath in the Ganga and offered Puja to Lord Viswanath?" Suraj said haughtily.

"Have you done so many pious things? I'm lucky to meet you. Indeed, a pinch of dust touched by your feet would be enough for me. I'm a fool to covet as precious a thing as the Ganga water!" said the vampire. She stooped and lifted a pinch of dust from Suraj's footprint and sprinkled it on herself. Lo and behold, she changed into a woman. "I've got back my human form!" she cried with joy. Then she prostrated herself to Suraj and said, "O pious young man carrying the sacred water! I'm most grateful to you!" Then she went away.

Suraj was as surprised as he was happy. He had walked a furlong more when he was greeted by a strong and stout man. "Can I be of any service to you?" asked the stranger.

"Who are you?" asked Suraj, rather irritated.

"I was a bandit. But now I

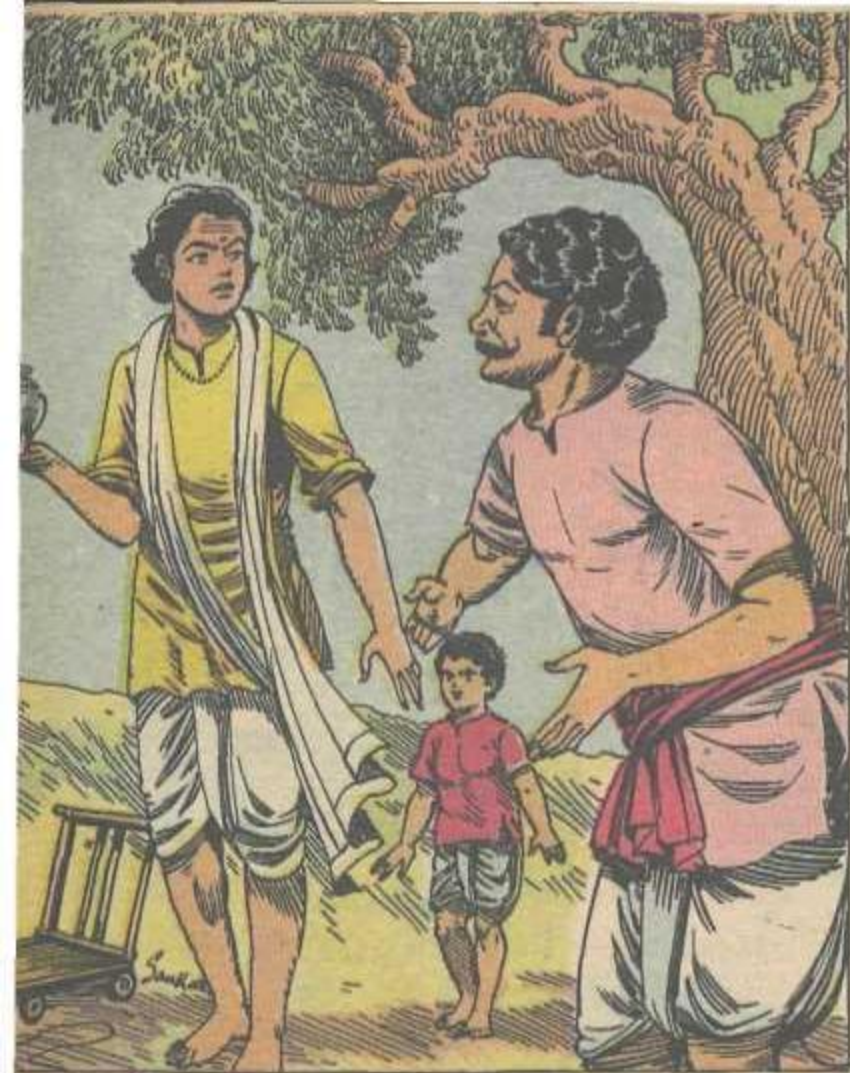


repent for my past deeds. I've a son, invalid from his infancy, thanks to my sins!" said the former bandit, drawing Suraj's attention to his son whom he drove on a small cart.

He resumed, "Now I eagerly look forward to the chance of doing a good turn to travellers."

"Well, I must hurry home with the Ganga water. I've no time to lose," said Suraj.

"Ganga water? Lucky young man, won't you give a little of it to my son? I've never tried this on him. Maybe this will cure him!" said the former bandit and he took a step towards Suraj, his arm extended to re-



ceive the pot.

Suraj moved away with a jerk. As a result a little water spilled out of the pot. The former bandit scooped up the wet patch of dust and pasted it on his son's persons. Lo and behold, the little boy got off the cart and walked!

"Thank you so much, O great pilgrim!" said the former bandit as he took leave of Suraj.

Suraj was at last back home. He sat down by his father's bed and told him all about his happy experiences on the way. "Drink this and you're sure to be all right," he said while pouring the Ganga water into his father's mouth.

Dharamchand drank the water with difficulty and waited. But there was no sign of any improvement in his condition. In fact, the next morning he was found to have lost his speech. He was on the verge of death.

The sage, on his return journey from the pilgrim centre, happened to camp near the village again. Suraj rushed to him and reported to him his father's condition and asked him, "While the vampire and the bandit's son were benefited by me simply because I was carrying the Ganga water, is it not surprising that the water produced no effect on my father?"

Calmly answered the sage, "Young man, there is nothing surprising about it. Both the vampire and the bandit were repentant over their past actions. They were sincerely desirous of doing good to others. Your father had not yet realised that he had been doing gross injustice. Even you did not have any genuine goodwill for him. If you were anxious to save him, it is because there was a lot left for you to learn from him in matters of money-lending. No, young man, let your father's soul go its way. Be careful yourself."



Suraj stood in silence for long. Then he bowed to the sage and returned home. He served his father dutifully, but he did something more. He began helping those who had been the victims of his father's cruelty. He became very considerate for

his clients himself.

His father died—but it was evident that he was dying with peace. And so far as Suraj was concerned, he not only prospered, but also came to be respected as a kind-hearted man.

"Is it true that our Munna once claimed before a wrestler that whatever the wrestler can do he can do better?"

"True!"

"Is it true that the wrestler gave him a punch in the mouth and knocked out a tooth?"

"True!"

"Is it true that Munna declared that it was now his turn and that he gave a punch in the mouth and knocked out two teeth?"

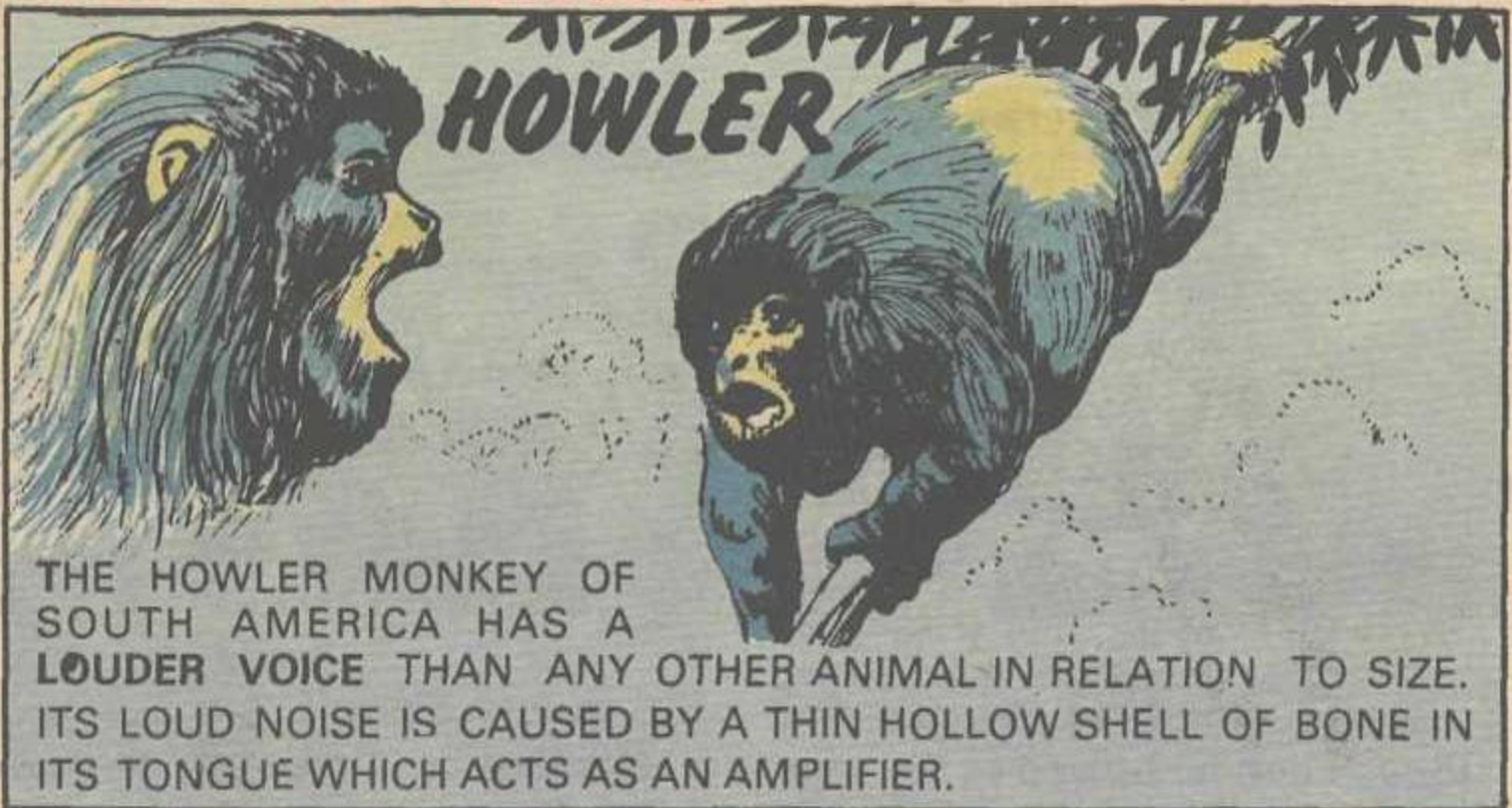
"True!"

"Unbelievable!"

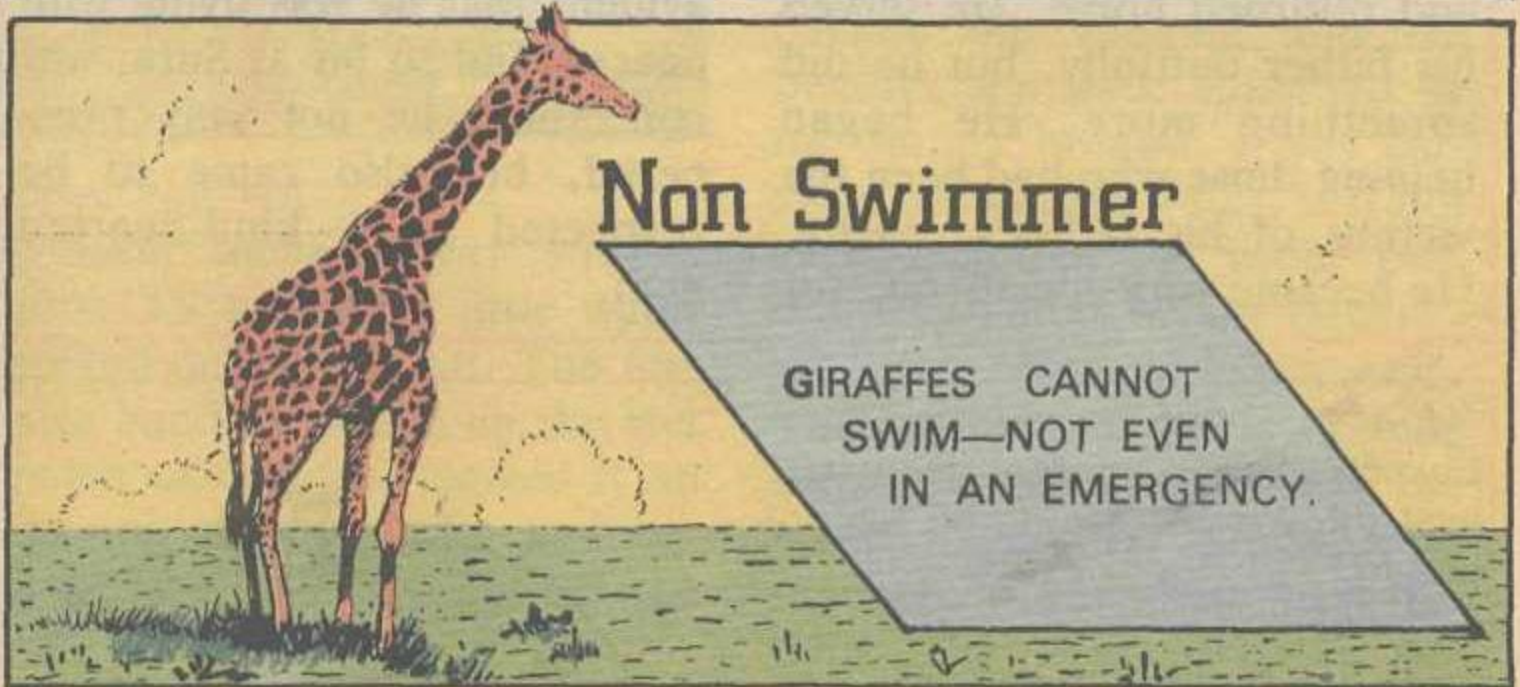
"I too thought so. But I counted and found that Munna was missing three teeth together!"



WORLD OF NATURE



THE HOWLER MONKEY OF SOUTH AMERICA HAS A **LOUDER VOICE** THAN ANY OTHER ANIMAL IN RELATION TO SIZE. ITS LOUD NOISE IS CAUSED BY A THIN HOLLOW SHELL OF BONE IN ITS TONGUE WHICH ACTS AS AN AMPLIFIER.



Non Swimmer

GIRAFFES CANNOT SWIM—NOT EVEN IN AN EMERGENCY.

ADULT CROCODILES **SWALLOW STONES** WHICH AID DIGESTION AND ALSO ACT AS BALLAST. THE STONES, (AS MUCH AS 4.77 KG) ENABLE THE ANIMAL TO REMAIN SUBMERGED ON THE RIVER BOTTOM WITHOUT BEING SWEEPED AWAY BY THE CURRENT.



Stone Swallower

THE LONGEST REGULARLY HELD ICE SKATING RACE IS THE ELF-STEDENTOCHT (TOUR OF THE 11 TOWNS) IN HOLLAND. IT COVERS A DISTANCE OF 124 MILES (200 KM).



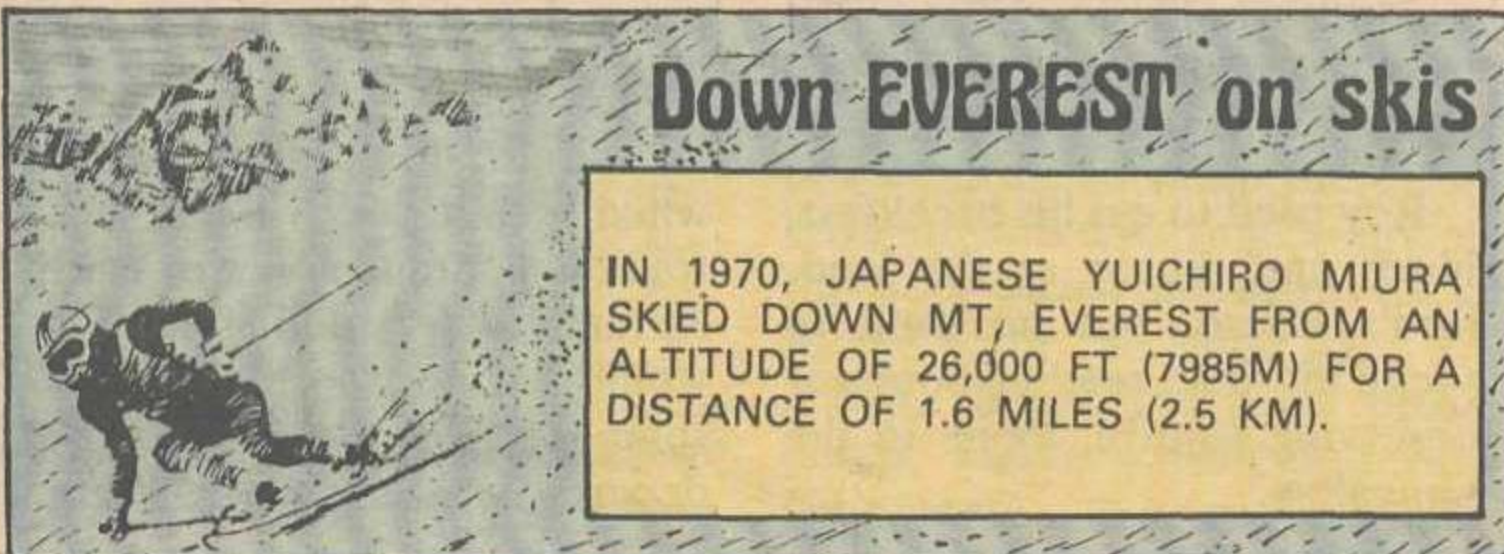
The LONGEST SKATE

The first Channel double



THE FIRST **DOUBLE** SWIM OF THE ENGLISH CHANNEL WAS MADE BY ARGENTINIAN ANTONIO ABERTONDO IN SEPTEMBER 1961. TIME TAKEN WAS 43 HOURS, 10 MINS.

Down EVEREST on skis



IN 1970, JAPANESE YUICHIRO MIURA SKIED DOWN MT. EVEREST FROM AN ALTITUDE OF 26,000 FT (7985M) FOR A DISTANCE OF 1.6 MILES (2.5 KM).



THE FORGOTTEN MAN

Siripur was a lovely little village at the foot of a range of hills. The river Kusumwati made an artistic turn near the village, thereby covering the village on two sides.

The local landlord had a garden house on the river. Once a friend of the landlord who was convalescing after a long illness came to live there. He was a wealthy young man from the town and his name was Ravi Roy.

Roy used to eat his breakfast, lunch and dinner at the landlord's house, but he used to spend his time, reading books or observing Nature, alone in the bungalow.

A poor man of the village, Jairam, used to run errands for Roy. Jairam had nobody in the world and he had no work to do either. When Roy lolled in his chair, Jairam went on telling him stories or reciting to him verses composed by the folk poets. Roy used to enjoy them very much.

Roy gave Jairam some money every day and Jairam was very happy.

"Jairam, don't fail to turn up when I leave your village," Roy told the poor man once or twice. Jairam understood that Roy would like to give him a handsome reward at the time of departure. Jairam waited for the

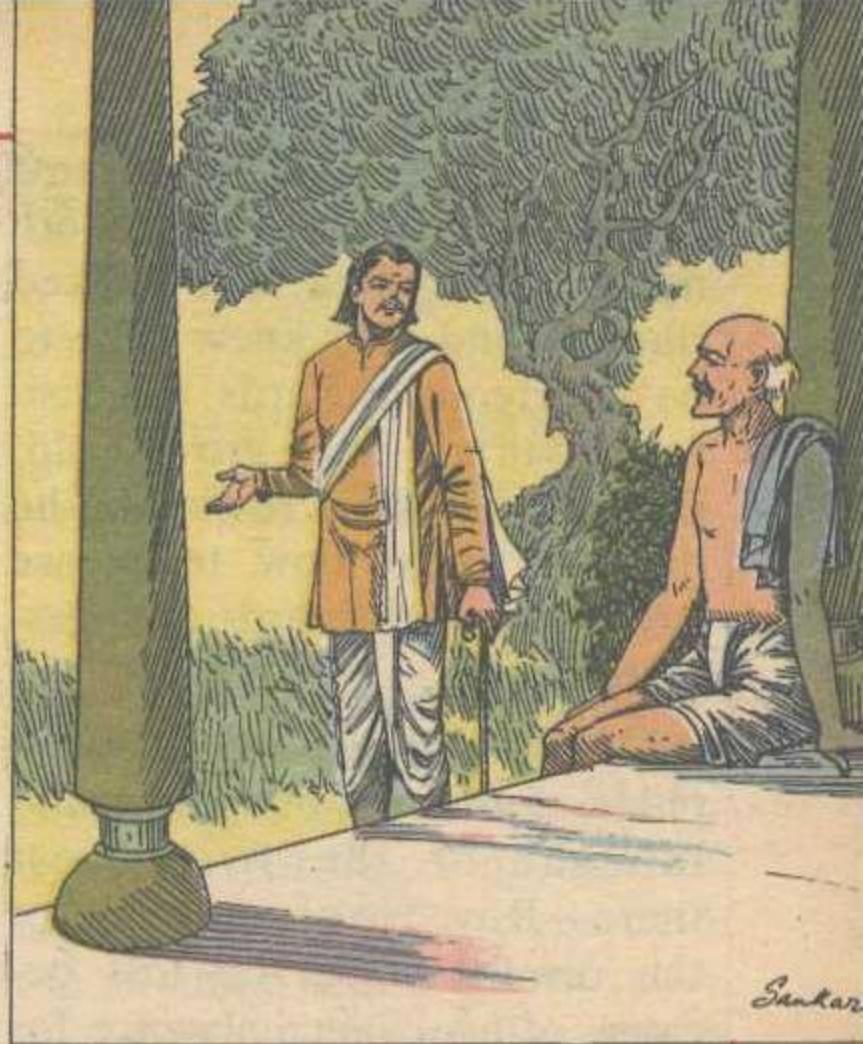
day with great expectations.

But imagine his disappointment when one morning he found the noble guest gone! Jairam had gone to the other side of the village to meet some ailing relative of his daughter. He planned to return within a few hours, but failed to do so as the river was in spate and the regular ferryboat did not ply for two days. He could manage to return only on the third day. Roy, on receipt of an urgent call from his home, had left for the town the previous day.

"I was deprived of my reward!" said Jairam beating his fist on his forehead. "My bad luck!"

A week later a party of town-folk occupied the bungalow. They had heard from Roy about the fine climate of the place and they took the bungalow on rent for a month. Jairam found work again. He served them with great sincerity, heating water for them, buying vegetables for them and doing several sundry works.

Within two years thereafter three or four guest-houses crop-



ped up on the river-bank at Siripur. Wealthy villagers built them as shelters for the sick and the tired. Jairam was always in demand to serve the campers.

In ten years time Siripur became a well-known health resort. Fine hotels and shops came up at the place. Somebody made arrangements for boating in the river. There were half a dozen restaurants. While some people came to camp there for days on stretch, others drove there for picnic and drove back to the town the same day.

But, though the place prospered, Jairam's condition deteriorated. The new guest-

houses, hotels and restaurants had their own staff. They were mostly young men. They talked fluently and also knew how to be courteous towards the visitors. Jairam had grown old. Besides, he was a rustic and he did not know how to please customers with words and gestures.

Often he sat leaning against a pillar of the old bungalow and thought of the first guest there—Roy. He also thought of the reward which he lost because of his chance absence for two days.

“Are you not Jairam?” one day he heard a call. Surprised, he stood up. “Don’t you recognise me?” a gentleman descending from a carriage asked him.

“Babuji! Roy Sahib!” exclaimed Jairam.

“Jairam, how are you?” asked Roy.

“Not doing very well, Sir!” said Jairam, wiping his eyes.

“I was afraid it will be so. The place has become prosperous. But who will remember of your contribution to its prosperity? Had it not been for your ready services, I will not have spoken or written about this place as fervently as I did. Anyway, I have now bought the old bungalow. I will add now rooms to it. It will become a good guest-house. And you will be here permanently, just as its guardian,” said Roy.

Jairam could not check his tears. “Babu, you had promised me a reward. You did not forget about it!” he said.

“No, I did not,” agreed Roy with a kind smile.



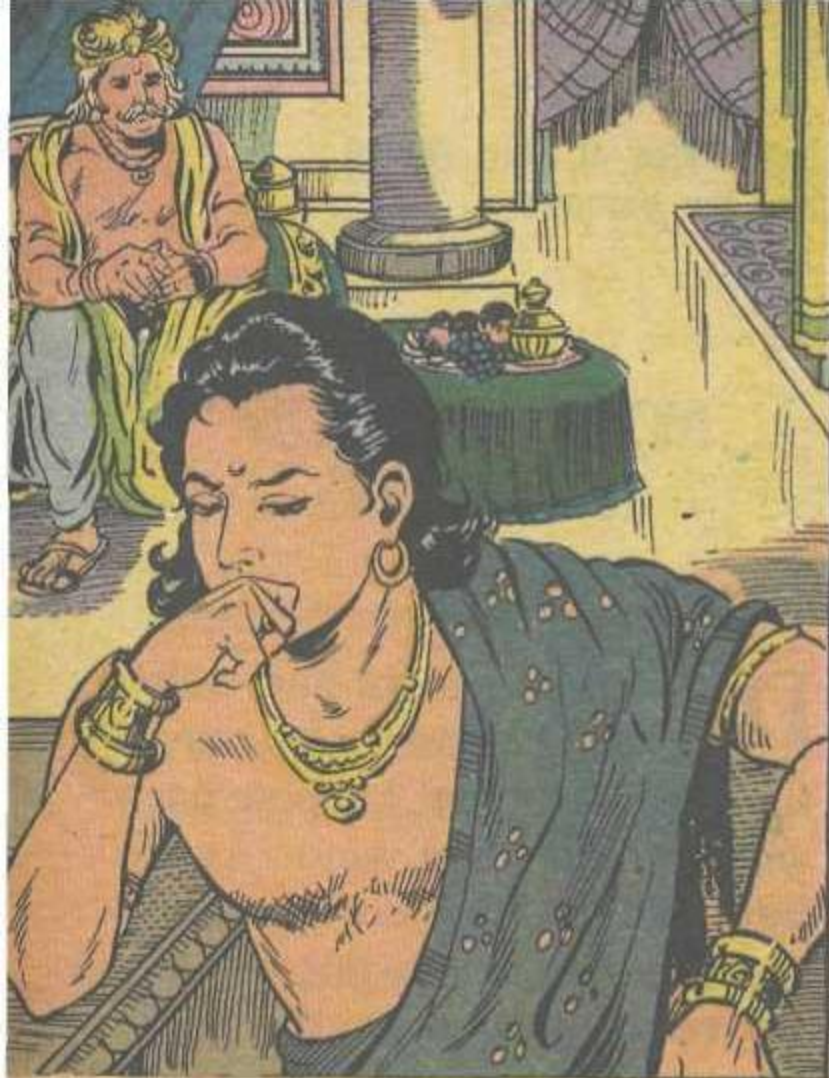
New Tales of King Vikram
and the Vampire

THE MYSTERIOUS HERMIT

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time, keeping pace with the whistling wind. At the intervals of thunderclaps and the moaning or howling of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of ghosts. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the Vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, I don't know what motivated you to take up this dangerous task. I wonder if you are not one of those princes who are quite whimsical in their conduct. Take the case of Prince Shivdutta, for instance. Let me narrate his story to you. Pay attention to it. That might bring you some





relief.”

The Vampire went on: Nilsagar was a prosperous kingdom ruled by King Agnidutta. He had two sons, Shivdutta and Shantidutta. While both the princes were quite promising in every respect, the elder prince, Shivdutta, was very popular with all because of his humility and kindness. King Agnidutta looked forward to the day when Shivdutta will begin assisting him in ruling the kingdom so that he can relax. At the moment the prince spent his time in study of scriptures and meditation. He liked to be left alone.

In due course the king de-

cided to make Shivdutta the crown prince. That will entitle the prince to represent the king in every matter. Nilsagar had a bad neighbour in the King of Surajpur who desired to conquer Nilsagar. King Agnidutta wanted Prince Shivdutta to take charge of the kingdom's defence and to strengthen it.

But a shock awaited the king. When he sent his minister to break the happy news to Shivdutta, the prince said that he was not interested in the position.

“What do you say, my young lord? All the subjects of our kingdom are looking forward to your coronation!” said the surprised minister.

“I don't care!” replied the prince.

“My young lord, if you refuse to assist your father in ruling the kingdom, the enemies of Nilsagar may feel bold to create problems in the land!” said the minister.

“I don't care!” replied the prince. “My advice is that my younger brother be made the crown prince,” he added.

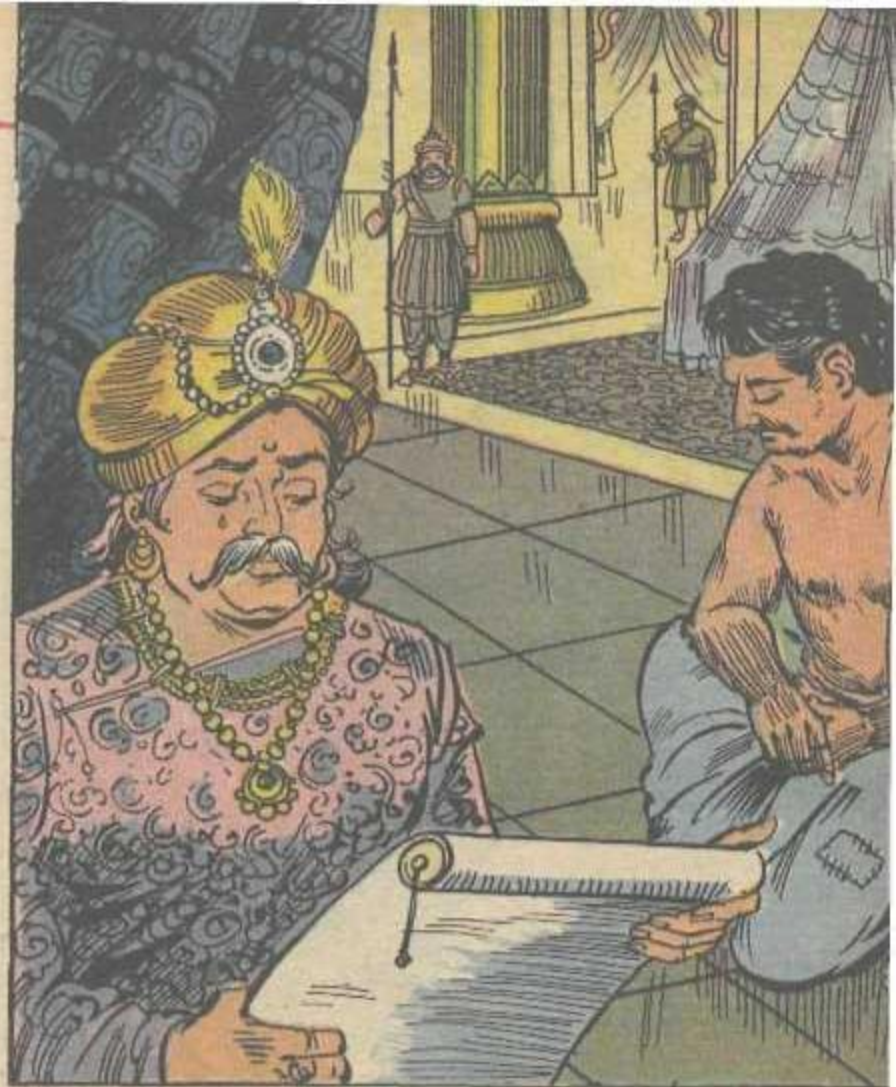
The king got annoyed. He summoned the prince to his presence. “You can advise me

in matters of state only after becoming the crown prince, not before that," he said. "As my elder son, it is your duty to become the crown prince. Secondly, as the king, it is my duty to make a choice and I have chosen you. Get ready for the ceremony," said the king in a huff.

Prince Shivdutta kept quiet. That gave everybody the impression that he had reconciled himself to his father's wish. But a greater shock awaited all. The next morning Shivdutta was not to be seen in the palace. Search was made at all his favourite haunts such as the hill-top behind the palace, the river-bank, the shrine of Lord Shiva and the library. He used to be often seen meditating at these places.

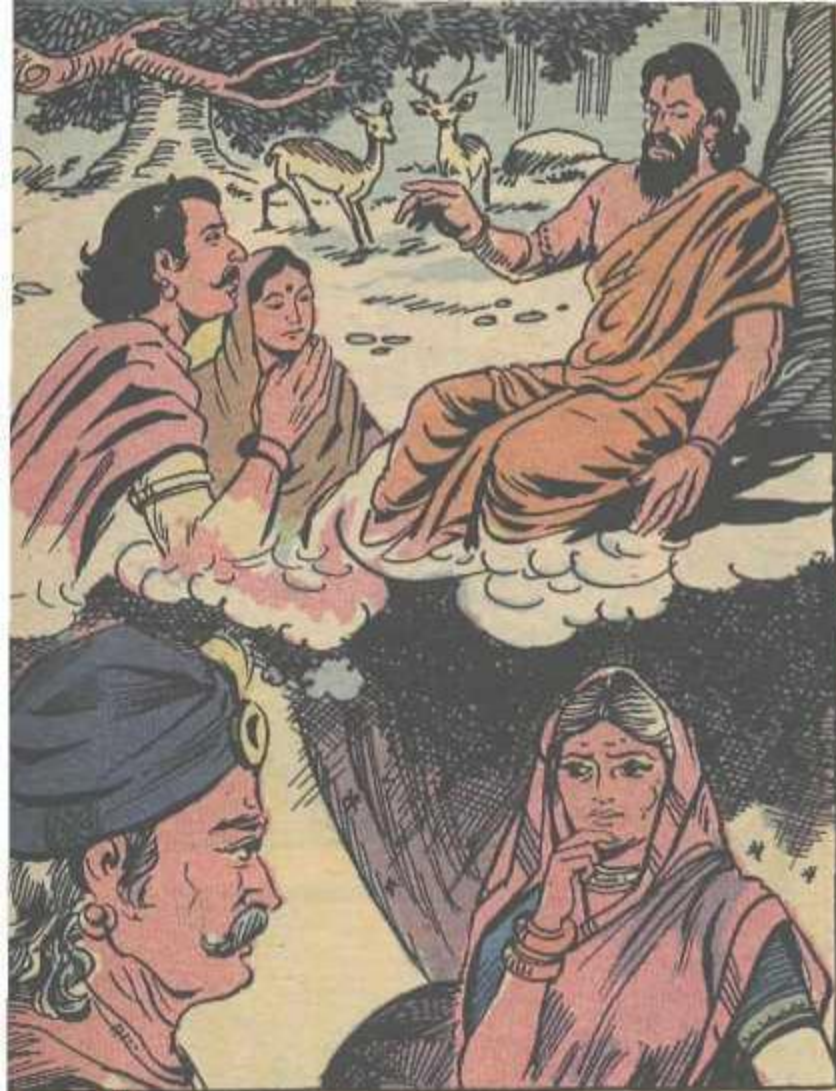
As he was not found at any of these places, search was made throughout the kingdom. But that yielded no result. The king became remorseful; the queen gave up taking food. All the activities in the court and the palace came to a stand-still.

On the fifth day a beggar brought a letter. It was from the prince, addressed to his parents. It said, "As a prince I had my duties which I should not have



forsaken. But I hear the call of my soul. Scriptures say that one's duty to one's soul is far greater than one's duty to one's parents or one's status or one's society. I have renounced everything. Now I am an ascetic. An ascetic has no obligation towards anybody. Pardon me."

"My son, how can you go away as an ascetic without my permission?" said the queen in great anguish and she wept. However, the king and the queen found some solace in the knowledge that their son was alive and he had chosen a path according to his free will. Even then they never stopped their



search for him.

After five years, as the king became sick, the younger Prince Shantidutta was made the crown prince. He did his best to assist his father. Another five years later the king died and Shantidutta ascended the throne.

Shantidutta was a good man, but not so able a king. Once there was a famine in the kingdom. The king had not shown enough farsight to collect grain from nearby kingdoms before the situation grew worse. Famine brought a kind of anarchy in its wake. Bandits plundered several houses, but the blame went to the poor starving

people.

The situation in Nilsagar was being watched by the King of Surajpur. He got ready to invade Nilsagar in order to conquer it. The news caused much panic all over the kingdom and particularly in the palace. To make the situation worse, King Shantidutta fell ill.

The young king's mother was deeply worried. A minister told her, "O royal mother, only one man can save the situation. He is Sage Vishmay. You must have heard all about him. His blessings can do miracles!"

Indeed, the queen mother had heard about the sage. Some years ago, some woodcutters entered a deep forest in search of sandalwood and found an ant-hill. When they dismantled the ant-hill, the sage emerged from it. The woodcutters were astonished beyond description. They called him Vishmay or the great surprise. They worshipped him and soon people believed that whoever was blessed by him found his wish fulfilled. Soon he became the most revered person in the kingdom.

The people had made a temple for him. The part of the forest around his hermitage had

become a charming locality, frequented by devotees.

While the queen mother was thinking over the minister's proposal, news of the enemy army approaching Nilsagar reached them.

That very night the queen mother paid a visit to the sage. The sage received her with great respect. The queen mother told him about the enemy's design on Nilsagar and about her son's illness. "You alone can save the kingdom. I seek your help," she said with tears.

The sage closed his eyes and after a few minutes smiled and said, "Mother! Don't you worry. No harm will come to you or the kingdom."

He then took an unexpected step. He went to the palace himself and addressed the soldiers and inspired them to defend the land. He blessed King Shantidutta and told him with great confidence, "Nothing has happened to you. Get up. All will be well!"

In no time the king felt fine. He called his generals and instructed them what to do.

The army of Nilsagar confronted the invaders with such courage and force that the



enemy army was routed. Not only that, Surajpur was conquered by Nilsagar and became a province of it.

All this was over in three days. There was great jubilation throughout Nilsagar.

The sage met the queen mother in private and prostrated himself to her and said, "Mother! Do I have your permission to depart now?"

The queen mother smiled through her tears and kissed the sage's forehead and said, "My son! I am fortunate to have a son like you. You have discharged your duty."

The sage left the palace the



same night.

The Vampire paused for a moment and then demanded of King Vikram in a challenging tone: "O King, it is obvious that the sage was none other than Prince Shivdutta. But that only raises more questions in my mind. Why did he respond to his mother's request and even sought her permission to leave now that he was an ascetic? Secondly, Shivdutta had clearly declared that he did not care for the expectation of his subjects or for the fate of his father's kingdom years before becoming a hermit. Now, is it not surprising that he should rush to the

rescue of the same subjects and defend the kingdom from the same enemy after becoming a hermit? Besides, how is it that he did not object to Nilsagar conquering the kingdom of Surajpur? O King, answer me if you can. Should you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your neck."

Answered King Vikram forthwith: "It is true that when one hears the call of one's soul, one need not feel obliged to one's social duties or family bondage. However, there is only one relationship in the world which is more than a family bondage. That is one's relationship with one's mother. Prince Shivdutta knew of his mother's anguish. He at last removed that anguish by seeking her permission to leave. This he did at this stage more out of his pure goodwill than out of any sense of obligation. To your second question, my answer is, there is a great difference between the action of an ordinary prince and the action of an enlightened sage, though the actions may appear the same. Had Shivdutta remained a prince and a ruler, he would have fought



for his own interest, with attachment to his people and his position. As a sage, Shivdutta had no personal gain or attachment for anything. He was generous with his spiritual power. He was helping all who came to him. Why should he not help the queen mother for a just cause? He proved that one can act on worldly matters without any attachment and involve-

ment.

He had no reason to object to Nilsagar conquering Surajpur. After all Surajpur wanted to conquer Nilsagar! It was the consequence of Surajpur's unjust war against a harmless neighbour. It was in the game!"

No sooner had King Vikram concluded his answer than the Vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.

The Great Inventor

Our friend Mantoo Sharma has just invented a new kind of cap. People who cannot hear distinctly can hear better if they put on this cap, without any hearing aid.

On the cap is written in bold: *Please Shout*.





THE INNOCENT

King Sundar Verma of Sundarpur was known to be a just and wise king. The people of his kingdom had come to believe that he never made any mistake in his judgement.

One morning as the king sat in his court, the royal guards led two citizens to his presence.

"Your Majesty, these two men were quarrelling over a money-bag. Each of them claim it to be his.

The king heard the case and understood that the bag must belong fully to only one of them. He stared at the two and, holding the bag, said in a stern voice, "Whoever between you is the real owner of the bag, may

step forward and receive it from me," he said.

Of the two the man named Narayan quietly stepped forward and received it. The other man named Sushil took a step after that, but stopped.

"Lead this fellow into the jail," ordered the king, pointing his finger at Sushil.

After that, enquiry showed that the king was correct in his assessment of the case. Asked the minister, "How were you so sure that Sushil was guilty of lie?"

"I took a calculated risk. From the confident way Narayan took the bag I knew that he is its rightful owner.



From the reaction on Sushil's face I knew that he was suspecting me to be playing a trick, perhaps I will withdraw the bag from the one who claimed first for generally it is the greedy or the guilty who was anxious to act as innocent," said the king.

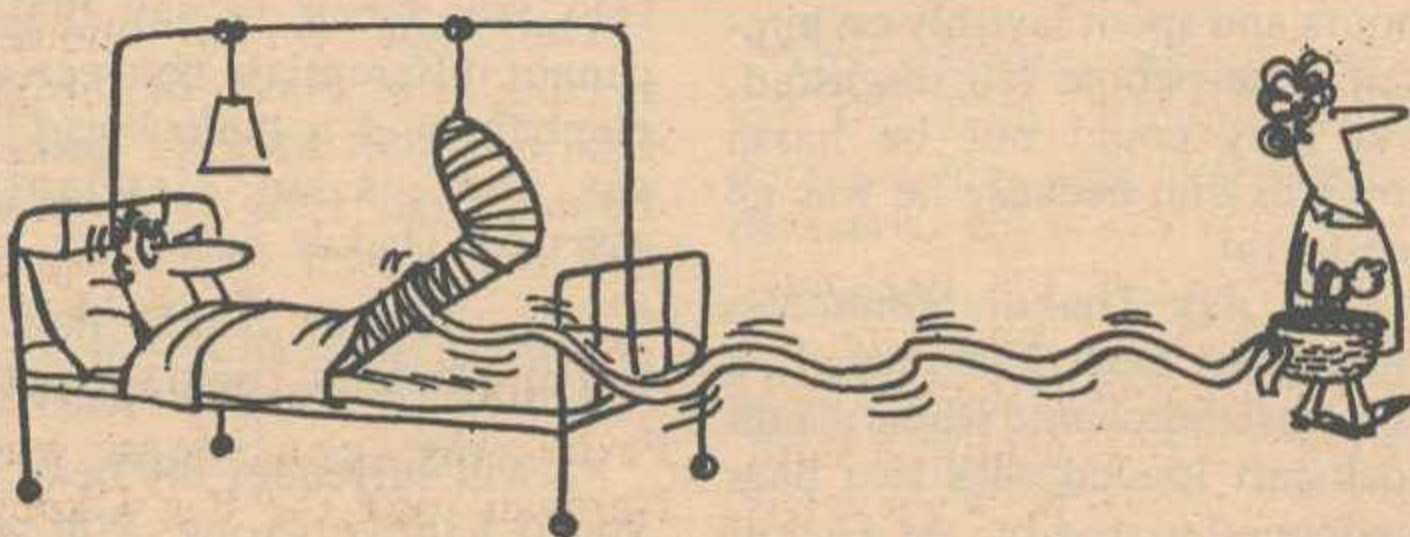
"It was a clever thing to do," said the minister.

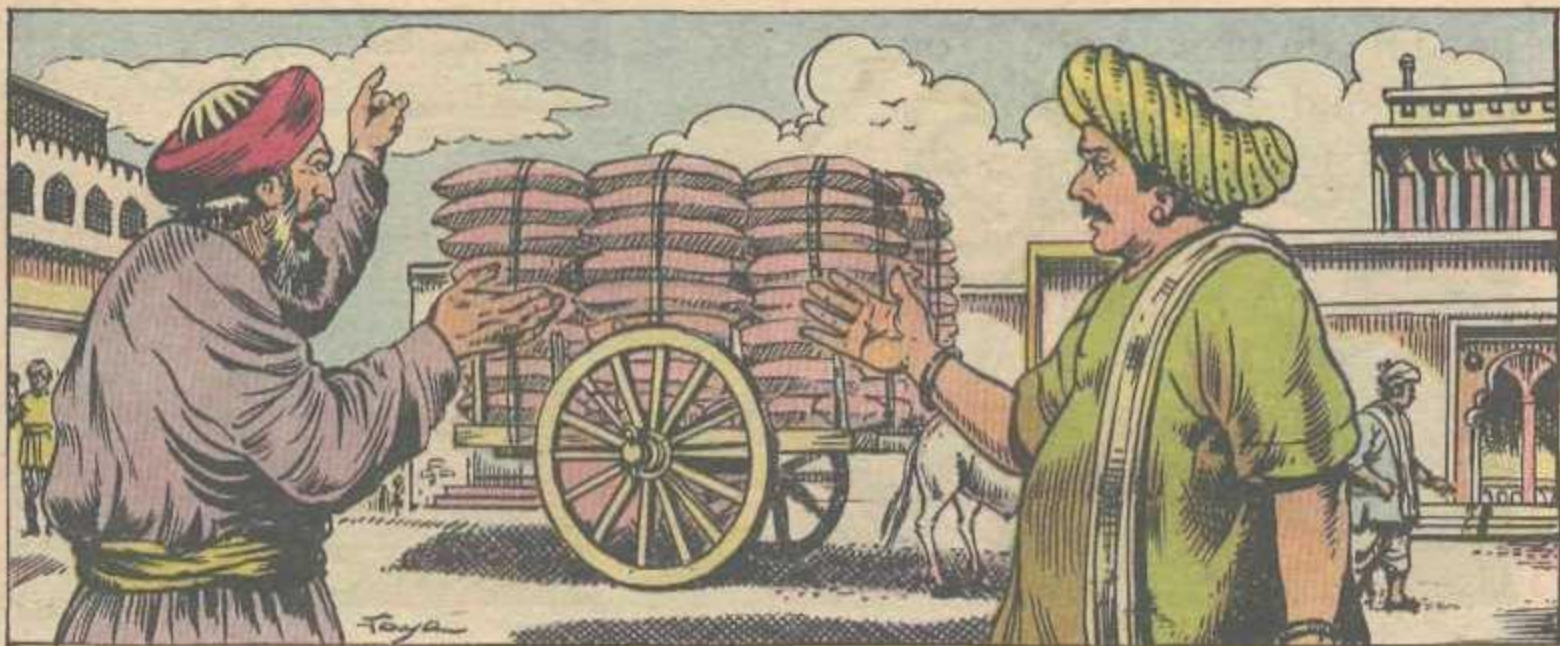
"Yes, but I became sure of Sushil's guilt because he did not cry out in anguish when he was

led to jail. An innocent man would have protested," added the king.

"Right," said the minister.

"But this was only a temporary step. Only after this our regular enquiry began and it was proved that Narayan was innocent and Sushil was guilty. We should not punish anybody without proofs to show his guilt," concluded the king.





A STRANGE PROPERTY

There was a big village named Hansban in the ancient land of Bundelkhand. Thakur Sahib was a resident of Hansban. No doubt, he hailed of a princely family, related to the Kings of Bundelkhand, but Thakur Sahib boasted too much of his ancestry. He had grown poor, but he hardly realised that. He borrowed money from his neighbours and spent lavishly on himself. The people felt disgusted, but they could not be harsh towards him because he was an aristocrat.

One day Thakur Sahib was talking to Seth Vir Prasad, a wealthy merchant, when a bullock-cart loaded with rice bags happened to pass by. As Thakur Sahib's eyesight was not so

good, he mistook it to be an elephant. "Look at that! My grandfather had a couple of elephants of this size, perhaps a bit bigger than this one," he remarked.

"Thakur Sahib, what you see is not an elephant, but a bullock-cart loaded with rice bags!" said the Seth.

"Do you mean to say that I cannot differentiate between an elephant and a bullock-cart? I say that is an elephant," asserted Thakur Sahib.

"No, Thakur Sahib, that is not an elephant," said the Seth.

"I will surrender my head to you if I prove wrong. Will you let me take possession of your

head if you prove to be wrong?" demanded Thakur Sahib.

"All right, Thakur Sahib, let it be so," agreed the Seth.

Soon the bullock-cart came closer to them. Thakur Sahib was left in no doubt about its identity. He looked very grave. "Very well, take away my head. Use your sword quickly," he told the Seth.

The Seth laughed. "That is hardly necessary, Thakur Sahib. Let your head remain with you. Ours was a light-hearted conversation, wasn't it?" he said.

But Thakur Sahib insisted that he was a man of word and that the Seth must take away his head. When the Seth repeatedly refused to take it, Thakur Sahib led him to the judge.

The judge heard the case and said, "Thakur Sahib's head legally belongs to the Seth, but the Seth need not cut it off. It remains his even though it continues to sit on Thakur Sahib's neck."

"If my head is his property, he must maintain it, shouldn't he?" asked Thakur Sahib.

"That is right," said the



judge.

From that very moment Thakur Sahib began demanding so many things of the Seth for the maintenance of his head. After all it was the head of an aristocrat! To keep it cool and comfortable, the Seth had to feed Thakur Sahib well!

That was rather a botheration for the Seth. Thakur Sahib harassed him with ever greater demands.

One day the Seth's friend, Ravi heard the Seth's problem. He thought over it and came out with a solution.

Next day while Thakur Sahib

was asking the Seth for money to buy a special tonic to keep his hair black, they heard a man shouting. "Will anybody sell his ears and nose? I'll pay good price!"

"Hello, man, come here, I've a pair of ears and a nose to sell," said the Seth, waving the man to come.

The man held a sharp dagger ready in hand. The Seth drew his attention to Thakur Sahib's ears and nose. "You can take them. They are parts of my property. But first tell me what price you propose to pay."

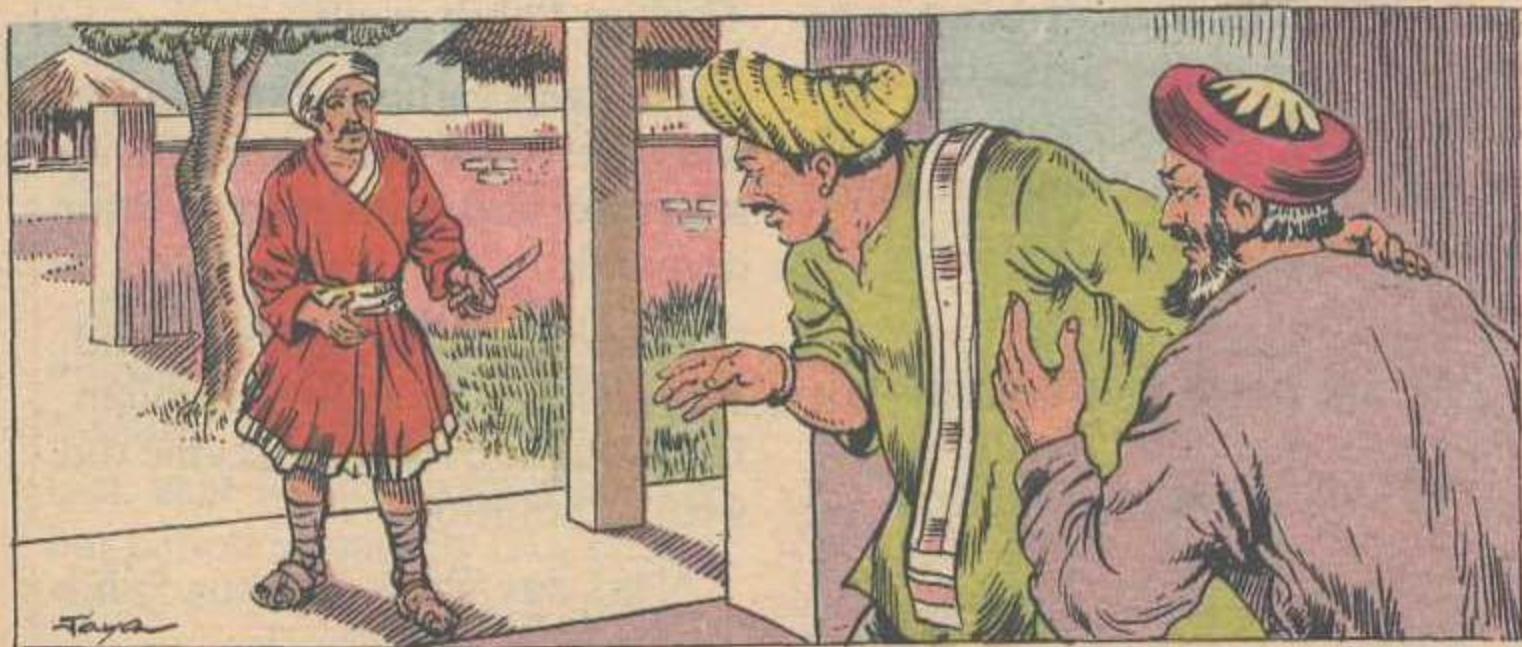
Thakur Sahib gave a start. "What do you say, my friend? How can you give away my nose and ears?" asked a horrified Thakur Sahib.

"You forget that they are not yours, but mine. The other day

you were insisting on my cutting off your entire head. What is wrong with my taking away only parts?" asked the Seth.

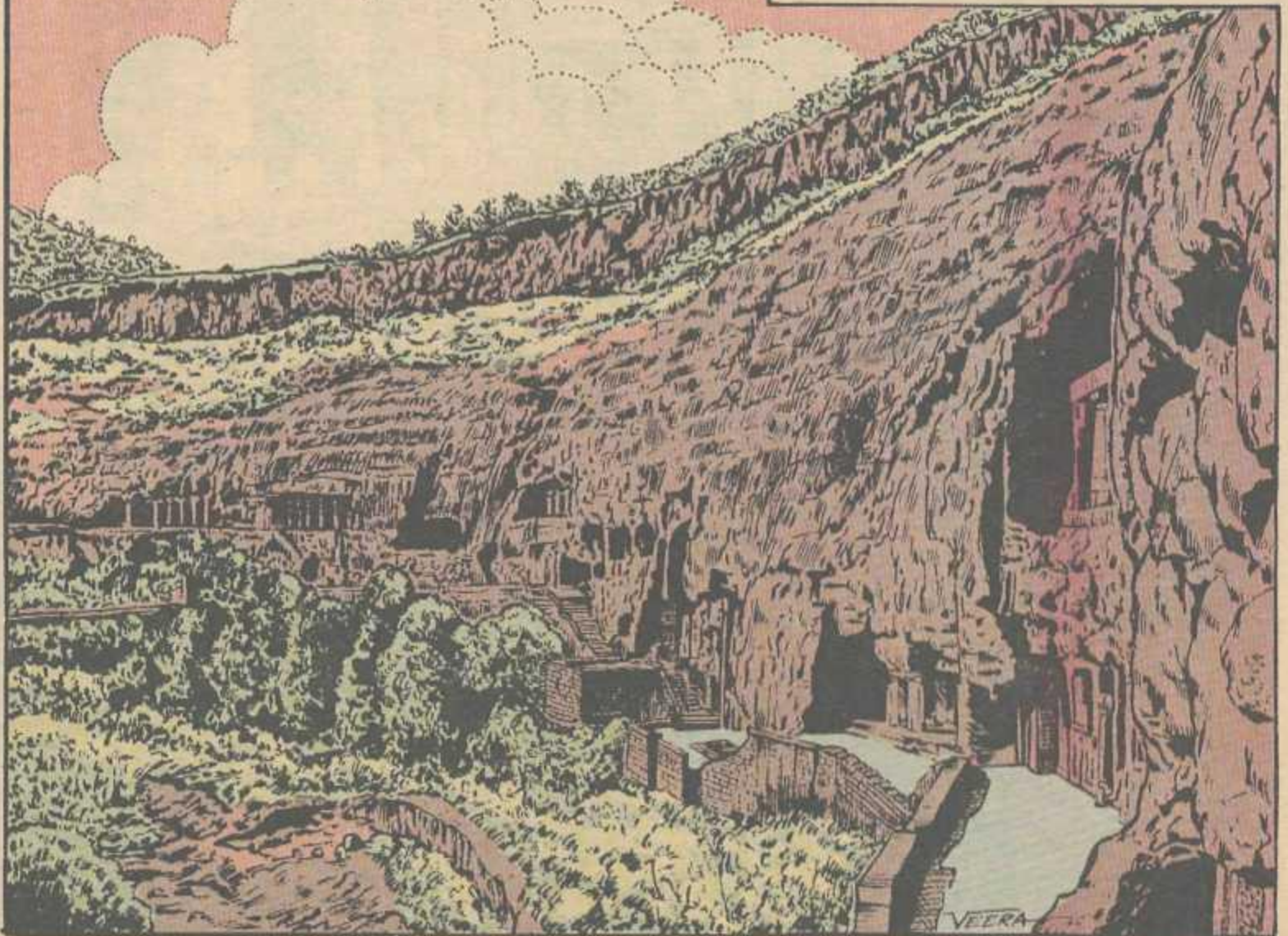
Both went to the judge. He heard their dispute and said, "The Seth has every right to sell the nose and the ears which were once Thakur Sahib's. But Thakur Sahib can pay the Seth all he has spent to maintain them since he became their owner and also a reasonable amount as interest on them. If Thakur Sahib does so, the head will be his own property again."

Thakur Sahib craved the Seth's indulgence, for he was in no position to pay the necessary amount. The Seth exempted him from paying that and said, laughing, "Well, the head is yours again. I need not maintain it any longer."



AJANTA AND ELLORA

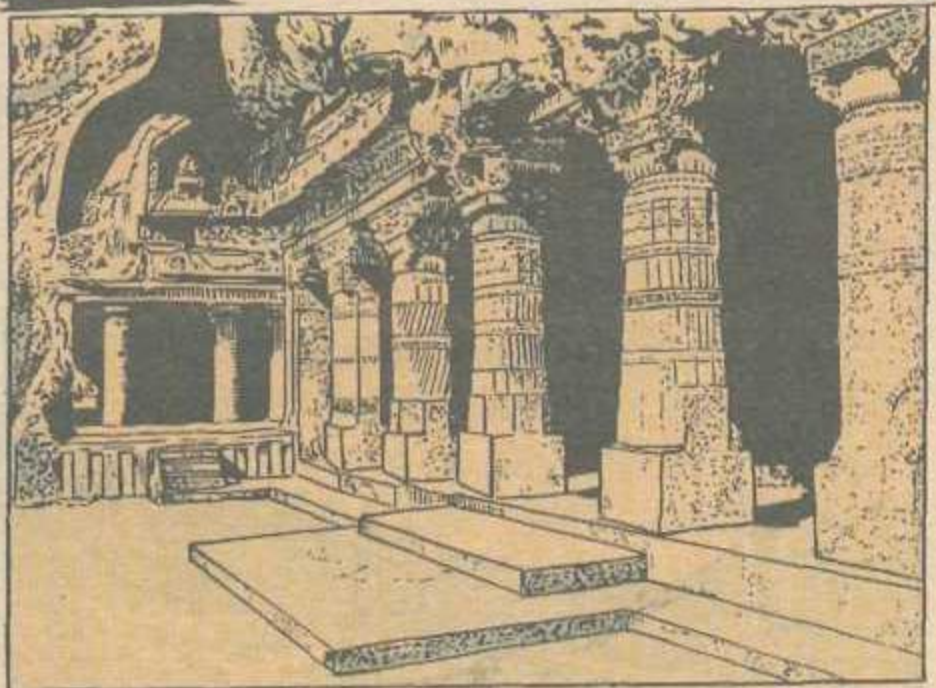
In the district of Ahmadnagar, Maharashtra, is situated a range of hills with 29 caves, remarkable for their frescoes. These are famous as the Ajanta Caves. Great artists first began working there two hundred years before Christ, inspired by the ideals of Buddhism.





Most of the frescoes in the caves and some of the Buddhist stupas and pillars were, however, built during the 6th and 7th centuries.

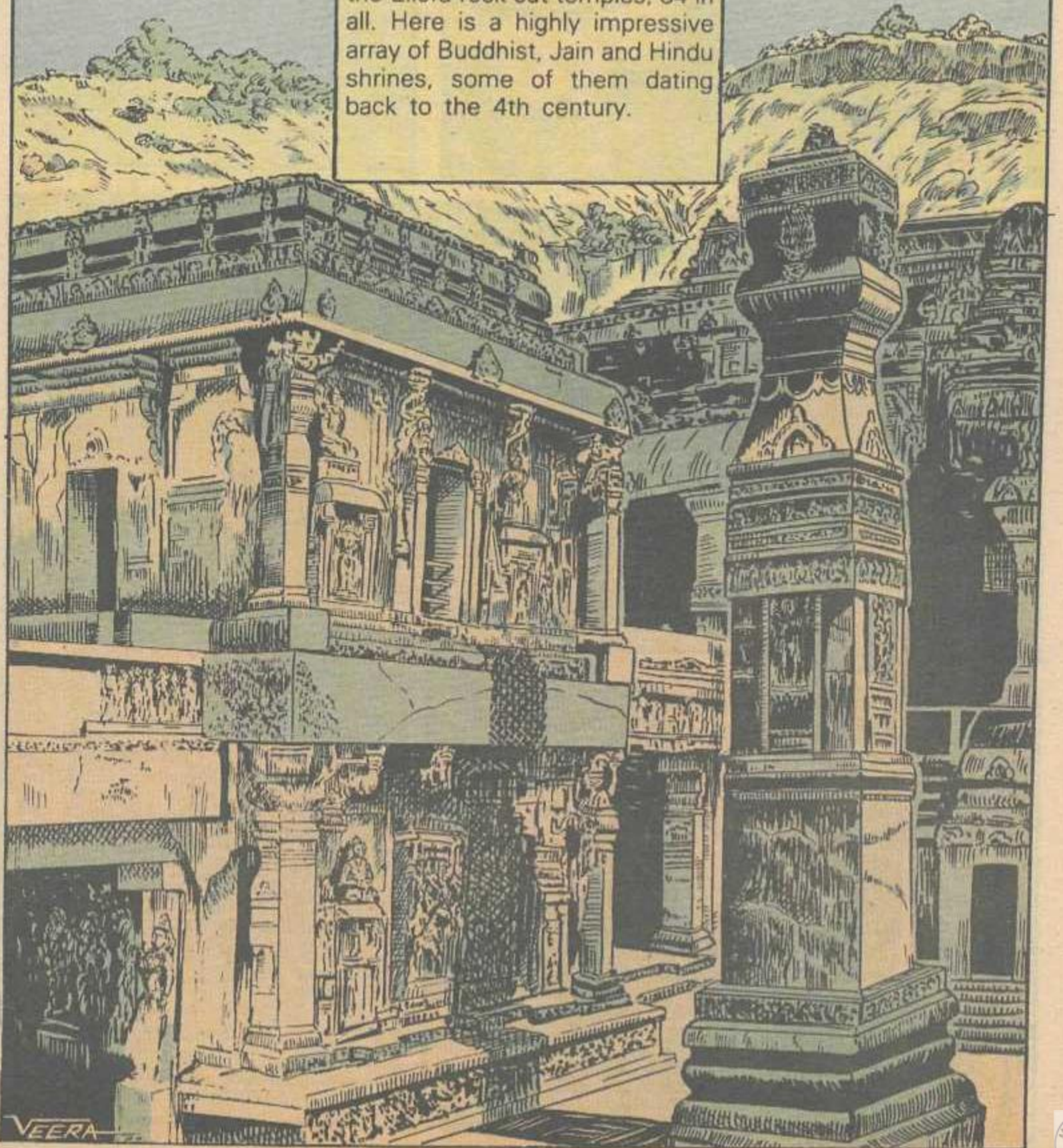
The pictures depict not only Buddhist themes, but also many scenes of the life as it was lived in a remote past. Here we see some foreigners meeting an Indian king in order to sell their horses.

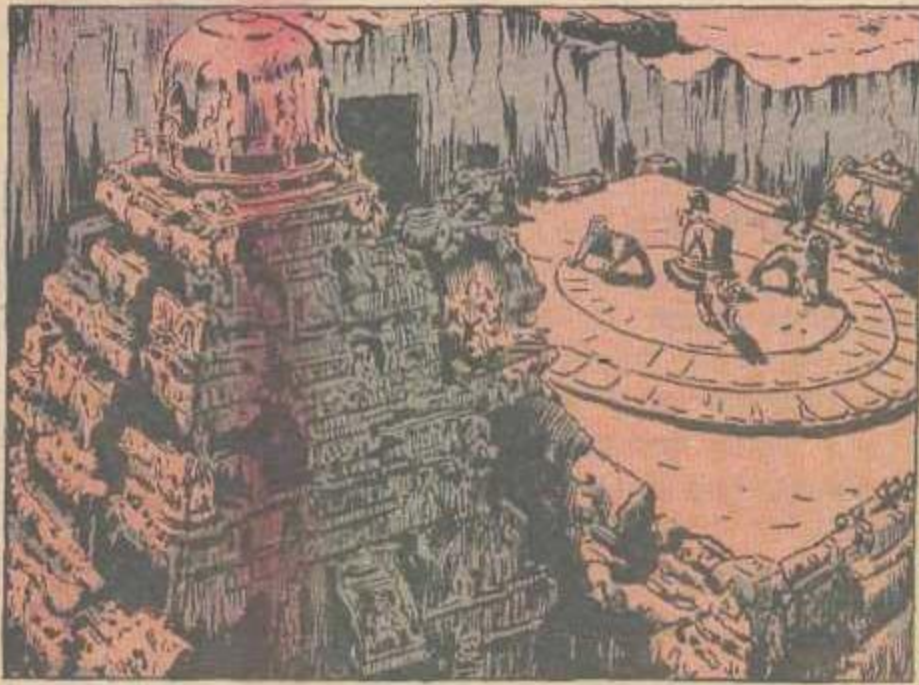


Here is the figure of a typical Indian king of the 7th century. He is flanked by maids bearing fly-whisks. In front of the women are five women musicians, showing how widely music was practised by women.

Panoramic view of Ellora

At a distance of about 30 km from Aurangabad is to be seen the Ellora rock-cut temples, 34 in all. Here is a highly impressive array of Buddhist, Jain and Hindu shrines, some of them dating back to the 4th century.





The most famous of these shrines is the Kailasha temple, a marvel in architecture. This is carved out of a single rock and has no parallel in the world for its artistry.

Cave XVI is one of the finest cave temples in the world, 154 feet in width and 276 feet in length. The shrine depicts numerous incidents with Shiva and Parvati as the centre, showing a high order of art.



In Cave XV is to be seen an excellent sculpture of Vamanavata. "No monuments of antiquity in the known world are comparable to the caves of Ellora," says John B. Seely in his book *Wonders of Ellora*.

A MATTER OF NEED

In the village Rajpur lived a wealthy peasant named Shivdas. Four kilometres away from Rajpur was Ramcherry, a small village. A poor farmer of Ramcherry named Jagu used to visit Rajpur and sell bananas which he grew on his own land. He sold a bunch of bananas for a rupee.

One day Shivdas needed a bunch of bananas urgently. He went to Ramcherry and met Jagu who readily gave him a bunch.

"How much should I pay you?" asked Shivdas.

"One rupee," replied Jagu.

"Jagu, you used to walk two miles for selling a bunch for one rupee. I saved you the trouble and came all the way myself. Should you not take less?" asked Shivdas.

"In fact I should demand a little more than a rupee. I take the trouble of visiting your village because I have the need of money. You took the trouble of coming here because you have the need of the fruit. Because the need is yours, I should demand a higher price from you. But I don't do so because we are known to each other!" explained Jagu.





GOLD IN WATER

Long long ago there was a kingdom in the Kashmir region which was quite prosperous.

Several rivers passed through the kingdom and there were also several lakes. One year it so happened that a flood destroyed the crop over a large area of the kingdom. Never before had flood made such a havoc. The king was worried, but when the flood receded people paid no attention to the problem any longer. The king thought that it was just a whimsical conduct of Nature and that the flood may not occur again.

But, to his surprise, the lake which had overflowed and des-

troyed the crop showed signs of overflowing once again. The river which flowed into the lake was in spate. Huge quantity of water was falling in the river every moment. Generally, after filling up the lake, the water used to flow out into two regular streams of the river which emerged from the lake. But this year, as in the previous year, the flow was about to make its way into the cornfields.

There was no time to lose. Even so the king did not know what to do. Some people advised him to perform a special Yajna. But that rite had to continue for three days. The lake was likely to overflow that

very night.

"My Lord, we have a number of criminals and cruel people in our kingdom. It is their sin which is bringing about such calamities. They should be punished," said a courtier.

The king was annoyed. "You are, I'm told, one of them. To begin with, you should be punished!" shouted the king.

The fact is, nobody could suggest any immediate step to prevent the flood.

In that kingdom lived a young man who was known for his strange ideas. Nobody ever took his words seriously though all liked him. He was always at the service of the needy and the forlorn.

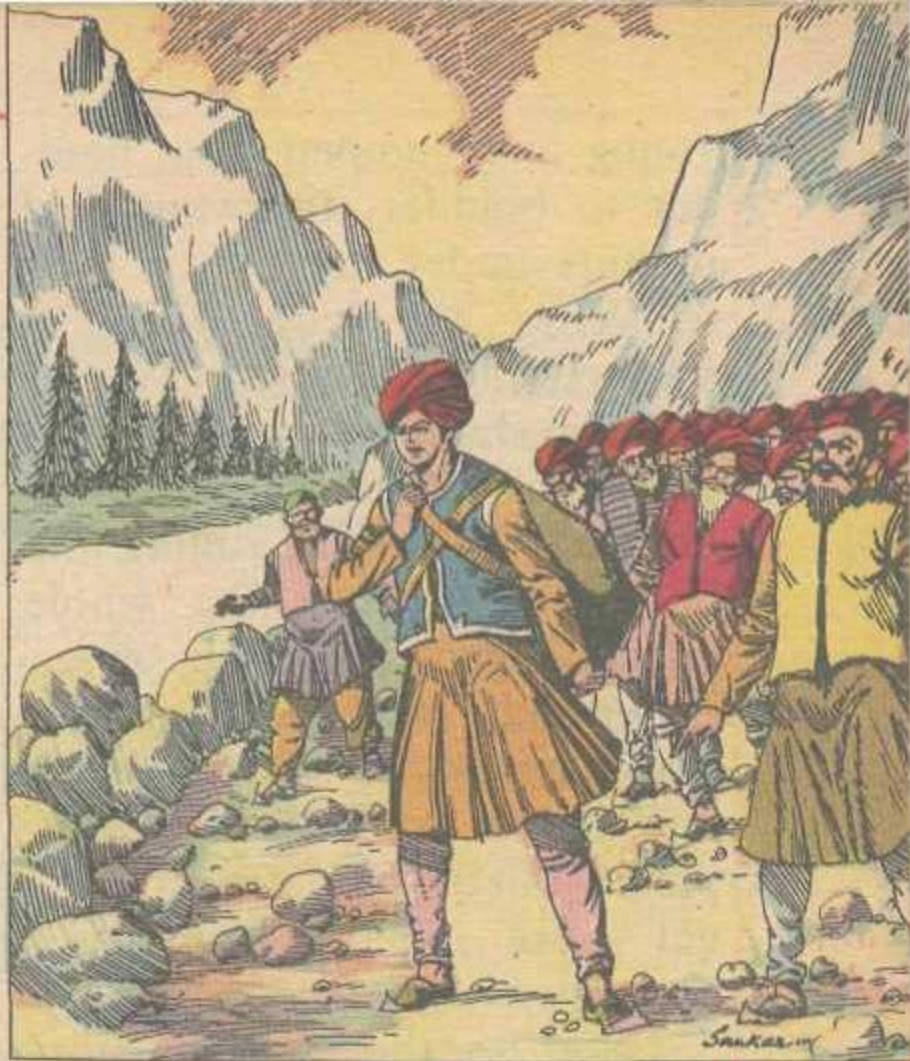
"My Lord, we must do something to stop recurrence of the flood!" he told the king.

"That is right. The question is what to do," observed the king.

"Can you spare a bagful of gold mohurs?" asked the young man.

The king looked at him. There was something in the young man's spirit which told him that he meant business.

"Take it by all means," said the king. He let the young man



carry a bagful of gold mohurs from his treasury.

The young man carried the bag on his back and proceeded towards the lake. A crowd followed him. They knew what had taken place between the king and the young man. Some of them thought that not only was the young man crazy, but also the king had grown crazy.

The young man stood on the bank of the lake. As the result of an earthquake which had taken place two years ago, some huge boulders and many small stones had fallen between the lake and the two streams which had gone out of the lake. The

young man jumped from boulder to boulder, throwing gold mohurs under them.

"What are you doing?" shouted the crowd.

"Stop shouting. Let us recover the gold mohurs!" said someone and he began rolling the boulder. At once the whole crowd began doing the same.

"Friends, the gold mohurs you recover are yours. But if you move the boulders completely out of the water, you will get more mohurs from me," announced the young man.

Then he threw even more gold mohurs into the water. Hundreds of people gathered and began moving the boulders with great zeal, competing with one another.

It was a moonlit night. They worked the whole night. In the morning it was found that the

level of the lake had come down. No flood invaded the cornfields.

The young man later explained to the king that because of the boulders the water collected in the lake could not flow through the regular streams. It spilled into the fields.

"My Lord, had I asked the people to remove the boulders as labourers on regular payment, they would not have worked overnight and with that zeal. It is the thrill of discovering the coins—as many as one could—that made them work so fast. Then they rolled the stones to the shore for extra money," the young man explained to the king.

Deeply impressed, the king made the young man his minister.



JADA BHARATA

Once upon a time there was a King named Bharata. At a ripe old age he left his kingdom to his sons and retired into a forest to lead the life of a hermit.

One day, as he was bathing in a river, he saw a fawn. Its mother was dead. He took up the fawn and nursed it like his own child. By and by he forgot his spiritual discipline and devoted all his time to bringing up the fawn which grew up into a lovely deer.

Even at the time of his death, Bharata thought of nothing but the deer. As a result he was born as a deer himself. Much did he repent now for his foolish attachment to a deer during his previous life. After the end of his life as a deer, he was born as the son of a Brahmin. His step-mother mistreated him and he left home, wandering like a mendicant. People mistook him to be an idiot though, in reality, he remembered his two previous lives and was never again attached to anything. One day he was taken hold of by the servants of a king. He was ordered to work as one of the bearers of the king's palanquin. He walked carefully, so that he did not tread on small creatures on the road. That gave jerks to the palanquin and the angry king kicked him. Calmly Bharata began speaking to the king of great truths from the scriptures. The king was amazed. He got down and prostrated himself to the strange bearer.

But Bharata did not wait to be honoured by the king. He left for the forest and sat in meditation and became a liberated soul. He is known as Jada Bharata or Bharata the Inert because he never reacted to any wrong done to him.



SHE IS BEAUTIFUL; HE IS HANDSOME

Roma Chakravorty of Calcutta writes to us that the last piece of her composition to be corrected by her tutor was an essay on her friend. She had described her friend, a girl of her age, as handsome. Her tutor crossed it, but she had no chance to ask him why, for he had been meanwhile transferred to another city.

Handsome is an adjective generally used for men. If you call a woman handsome, you are not referring to her facial beauty as such, but to her total personality. In such a case she has to be a grown up lady, perhaps commanding some position and not a school going girl.

Once in a while, of course, you meet a "handsome" lady like the wife of Poet Robert Burns:

She is a winsome wee thing,
She is a handsome wee thing,
She is a lo'esome wee thing,
This sweet wee wife O'mine.

But as you can see, the poet is speaking of the lady in a lighter vein. In any case she is a grown-up lady.

Beautiful can be used to describe objects other than human beings. Mathew Arnold describes Oxford as a "Beautiful City! so venerable, so lovely, so unravaged by the fierce intellectual life of our century, so serene!"

We also use the word handsome to mean something ample or handy: he receives a handsome salary or it is a handsome bag.





What is the role of religion in the life of modern man?

—A. Nagaraja Sarma, Piler.

Modern or ancient, man has always been a seeker. His quest in the material world has brought him scientific knowledge. His quest for truth, his eagerness to find the ideal goal of life, has given him different religions.

Through the ages religion has given us inspiration to build great temples, stupas, churches, synagogues and mosques. It has been the inspiration behind the best of humanity's architecture, art, music, dance and literature. It has also brought wisdom and enlightenment to many.

But every great thing has its both use and misuse. Religion has been put to gross misuse by the ignorant and the wicked. They have destroyed the monuments and wealth of those who belong to a religious faith different from theirs. People subscribing to different religious views have despised and attacked one another. Such behaviour is far from the spirit of religion. Similarly, in our time people have tried to take political and social advantages in the name of religion. This is selfishness and deception.

Religion in this sense, as it is practised through show of communal pride or violence, has nothing to do with true religion. At the same time, true religion can never stop playing its role in the life of man. True religion is spirituality. It is the process of discovering one's inner spirit, one's true self as well as the process of realising God.

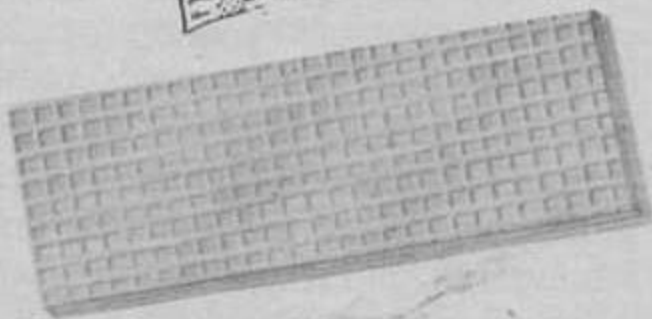
What are "the six systems of Indian philosophy"? Are they practised today?

—Jayant Varma, New Delhi.

The six systems are Nyaya, Vaiseshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mimamsa and Vedanta. All of them cannot be said to be practised today, though they are studied as theories. However, their principles are incorporated in the leading systems practised today, namely Vedanta, Saiva Siddhanta and Yoga.



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D. Jagadish Babu



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The Prize for June '87 goes to:—
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The Winning Entry:— "Agony & Ecstasy"

PICKS FROM THE WISE

Noise proves nothing. Often a hen who has merely laid an egg cackles as if she laid an asteroid.

—Mark Twain

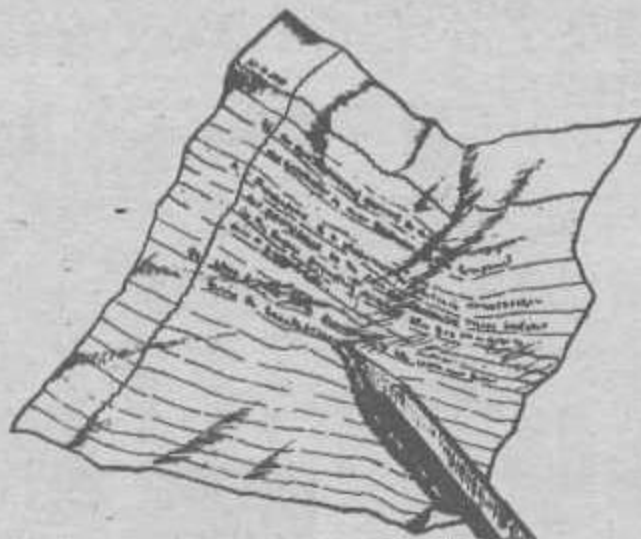
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